





Oh no! After I Reincarnated, My Moms Became Son-cons!

vol.2 – Empress of the Human Empire: The
Phoenix's Nest

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[Novel Updates](#)

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Son con Vol 2

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Chapter 20 Prologue

Addressed to your majesty.

Confidential telegram.

I have visited the various famous doctors and magicians as per your orders. I have also learned that his majesty's condition cannot be cured and can only be alleviated. I have also learned only their queen, Vyvyan Galadriel* can alleviate the symptoms. In my opinion, I believe you have no need to waste your energy concerning yourself with the elves. Though they are cautious and on-guard, they have no intent of breaking the agreement. His majesty has just won a battle over here. He also discovered that the movement of the Earth Dragons are connected to humanity. Your majesty, please be cautious of our generals as there is a chance that they may be trying to instigate a war with the elves. Please be extra cautious. His majesty has departed and should arrive in our capital in around three days. Before his majesty departed, he spent a long time with his fiancé and was reluctant to leave her. After he departed, she never left his mind. I believe that you have won over Queen Vyvyan Galagriel as a mother, but we need a woman who can tie his majesty down. His majesty does not crave women. What he needs is a woman who he can fall deep in love with. We need such a woman if we wish to keep his majesty with us. I wish your majesty the best of health.

Sent from the Elf Capital Dulgana.

Castell.

The candle flickered in the gold room located deep in the palace. This was a huge room. There were exquisite designs drawn on the walls. There was a fireplace on one side burning slowly. There was a large bed with a thick mattress and soft velvet blanket. An elegant silk curtain hung behind. The person in the red velvet blanket scrunched the letter up and threw it directly into the fire.

The dignified maid on the sofa to the side looked at the person on the bed, and asked in a courteous tone: "Your majesty, is it a confidential telegram?"

There was no response from the person on the bed. The person in the blankets shifted her body position in the blankets. She extended her long white elephant-trunk like bare arm out, and picked up a grape from a bowl made of jade sitting on the red-wooden table. The maid hurried over to the bed and courteously extended her a hand. Moments later, the grape's skin and seed were thrown into her hands.

The person inside the blanket whose laugh sounded like a silver bell laughed and said: "It's related to my son."

The maid gripped the grape skin and seed tightly in her hand, and softly said: "Yes, his majesty will be arriving tomorrow. Your majesty, will you be going to meet him in person?"

The person on the bed got up. The red blanket didn't cover her naked body and slid off her body as though her body was covered with lube. Her black hair swayed freely in the air. Her eyes were a beautiful black like an obsidian. She pursed her red as blood lips and said: "Of course. Of course I'm going to go and see my own son in person. The things Castell mentioned in the letter were completely useless, but he was right about one thing. I'm very unhappy right now."

The maid quickly lowered her head as she didn't dare to look her majesty in the eye. She looked down at the floor and courteously said: "May I ask what has caused you to be angry, your majesty? I have three kids. If it is about his majesty, I could share with you my humble opinions."

"Oh? Is that so? Alright. I want to know what sort of girl my son likes. What sort of girl could steal his heart and keep him here?"

The empress looked at the maid who had a slight frown. The maid's eyes were filled with anxiety and tension. The empress looked like a silly mother who wanted to fulfil the wilful, unreasonable wish of her son. The maid took in a deep breath. She felt like her heart stopped beating. She was a new maid who'd just started. She hadn't ever seen the prince before, so how was she supposed to know what sort of girl he liked?

"Umm... I think his majesty must like the type that's kind, gentle and has the perfect body."

Well, no matter. All men like that sort of woman. As long as his majesty was a normal man, there'd be no way he'd hate the sort of woman. My guess may not be right, but it's definitely not wrong.

Her majesty kept silent, so the maid didn't dare raise her head. The domineering aura from the empress's nude body was getting stronger. The maid's two legs were quivering uncontrollably. It was like an antelope going face-to-face with a lion. Her sixth sense kept telling her to run as it was dangerous but all her body no longer had the capacity to move an inch.

She couldn't escape, and her legs had lost all their strength so she couldn't move.

Her entire body as trembling from head-to-toe, her legs were quivering as was her hand tightly gripping the grape seed causing the seed itself to look like it were placed on a quaking surface. She gripped it so tightly, grape juice seeped through the gaps in her fingers.

The empress coughed, then turned around and pulled the blanket over to cover her body, and said: "The cold weather is tiring me out. I'm going to sleep now. You may leave. Remember to keep warm."

The heavy tension slowly dissipated. The relieving feeling that came over the maid dropped her to her knees and she took in a deep breath. The grape skin and seed in her hand fell to the floor. She hurried to pick them up but was relieved that she chose the right things to say. She was glad she was going to survive. Her predecessor vanished and never appeared again due to a slip of the tongue. She was face-to-face with a dangerous situation, but she managed to pull through...

Her eyes suddenly widened. In front of her stood a lady with her black hair in ponytail and dressed in beautiful military gear. Her eyes, as green as ice picks at the bottom of a deep well coldly looked at her, so cold it felt like it pierced her bones and could take her life. She could see her fate in the eyes of the lady in front of her.

A long sword pierced straight through the maid's heart. The thrust was delivered with the utmost precision. The sword had pierced through her heart the moment the maid went to turn around.

“Her majesty must never be soiled by anything, whether that is your blood or grape juice.”

In the instant the sword pierced her, a large batch of cotton was also stuffed into her. The cotton sucked up all the blood in her heart, so there wasn't so much as a drip of blood when the sword was pulled out of her body from behind.

The sword pierced the maid's heart in less than a second and yet not a drip of blood was in sight. The maid still had a tight grip on the grape seed and skin when she got stabbed. It was like time had frozen and she hadn't actually died.

From behind, the empress lazily said: “Nier, you were a bit slow there.”

The girl with the high ponytail let go of her sword, knelt down on one knee with a loud thud, lowered her head and said: “I am sorry, your majesty! Please punish me!!”

When the corpse rocked and looked like it was going to fall over, a young girl dressed in the same attire suddenly appeared from the shadows, caught the corpse and then quickly disappeared from the room.

Not a drop of blood was in sight.

“Aaahh, forget it. You're getting faster and faster with the sword, and I'm very happy about that. Come here my child.”

The empress extended her hand out from her bed and indicated for Nier to come over. Nier moved over to the bed on her knees. Her green eyes had tears welling up due to being touched. The empress reached out and gently stroked her head. Nier was so excited her whole body was shaking and her tears helplessly rolled down her face. She was worried that she'd die from the over-excitement of having her majesty stroke her head.

“Y-your majesty.”

Looks of envy and jealousy shot at Nier from all directions. Nier was shaking so much she almost went mute. The empress chuckled and then said: “You haven't disappointed me as my Valkyrie. Continue to loyally serve me with your sword. Do not lose your way.”

Nier excitedly shouted: “I will!!”

She then stood up while she was still shaking, and then left the room wobbling as though she was completely exhausted.

That was a given.

As the empress’s Valkyrie, her sword, armour, blood, life, flesh bones, marrow...

Everything belonged to her majesty!

Everything.

If you leave the palace and sweep your eyes over the city and you will find tens of thousands of buildings lights on.

The city remains bustling even after nightfall. You will see women decorated with their sheen jewellery, while the proud city guards sleep with their weapons like fierce wolves and tigers.

This empire which was created through countless battles in the North and South is none other than the domain of royalty!

This is humanity’s domain! In just tens of years of conquest, humanity has occupied the large mainland, the most land, and has become the strongest and most flourishing empire! This was where all the royalty of all races were! This land belongs to the ruler of the mainland!

Welcome to the capital of humanity’s empire built on the Great Plains. This is the city that never sleeps, made using all of humanity’s technology, intellect and determination – Helier Persia!

Meaning, the Phoenix’s Nest.

Chapter 01

“We wish your majesty good health, and may your awe live on forever.”

“You may all rise.”

This is the conference chamber for the empire of humanity.

The chamber was like a large sports field. Wait, no. More like half a sports field. There were two rows of tables, one on each side and on another end was a semi-circular seating area. In the most prestigious place, in other words, where the king is seated is a small room. The design of the small room is very logical. Speaking from inside the room produces a loudspeaker effect, while the voices of those below will be louder.

The throne was much higher than the long tables below. A black veil which kept the sun out was hung in front of the throne. Right at this moment, the empress was sitting on her throne with one leg over the other. The retainers below were only able to see the empress' military uniform, boots and body. The empress has always been a swordsman, so even after ascending the throne, she continued to scoff at loose and pretty dresses. As such, she's always dressed in military gear. This also raised the prestige of the army to an all-time high.

“The empress is with us!”

That is what the soldiers believe.

The function of the black veil was to prevent the retainers below from seeing the empress face.

How come her personal lowly servants are allowed to see her appearance?

Only those retainers close to the empress are allowed to see her face. Those who see her face without her allowing the veil to be lifted or otherwise just seeing her appearance were to be punished. If they were punished lightly, they'd be exiled, if they were to be punished severely, it'd be the death penalty. The empress is considered the child of god, a representative of god's greatness,

so mere mortals weren't qualified to set their eyes on her. Only those who've received the love of god and the empress permission may see her appearance.

The empress doesn't cover her face because it's ugly. A painter sighed after he finished painting her and said that humanity's greatest loss was that humanity's most beautiful face was hidden away. What's said about her appearance isn't groundless. Those who win her favour and are fortunate enough to see her face are all stunned by her beauty.

However, the empress has never been proud of the fact that she's beautiful.

The people by the two rows of tables heard her and sat behind the tables where they looked at the person sitting across from them. The conference chamber is separated into two different parties very distinctly. This was the place for a decision to be made from the opinions of both sides. On one side were seated those in formal clothing, while seated on the other were those in military uniforms. Those in formal clothing all have a gold coloured pigeon pattern on their clothing, while those in military uniforms had a golden bear.

"You may begin your discussions. What opinions do you have on our neighbouring country, Castor?"

The empress shifted in her seat behind the black veil as though she was really bored. She rested her right arm on her throne with which she used to support her head as she looked down at her retainers below. The two rows of retainers turned to each other to discuss the topic. Not long after, one of them from the formal clothing party stood up, looked at the throne, bowed respectfully and shakily said: "I wish your majesty infinite happiness and eternal health. Edward greets your majesty."

The empress nodded and said: "Oh, Count Edward. Please speak."

"Yes, your majesty..."

Count Edward wasn't old but he had lots of grey hairs and had bid goodbye to his youth. He held a sheet of paper in his hand. Numbers and letters were written neatly on it. He looked at the people across from him, softly cleared his throat and said: "Dear colleagues, there's not much that needs to be said about our neighbouring country, Castor. They are an important business partner for us. Although our empire possesses a vast amount of territory, we don't have

two harbours. The location of Castor makes for perfect harbours due to their natural terrain. Moreover, if we control Caster, it's the equivalent of controlling all imports and exports by sea. In other words, we'll have complete control over the wealthy business in the river delta. The taxes they pay Castor annually are equal to the income of three of our cities. Further, if our businessmen want to do business across the sea, they must pass through Castor and therefore must pay taxes. As a result, our empire's goods struggle to compete outside of our country. The empire needs to expand not only its land but also on the business front. Just as firepower and spears are used as weapons for conquest, so is money. Wherever money circulates, that is our territory. We must show those outside barbarians our empress greatness, intellect and power. Before we get ourselves warships, money is our greatest weapon. In order to conquer the barbarians, we must first have Castor..."

The empress seemed a little annoyed and said: "Count, everybody seated here understands the importance of Castor, including myself. If you have nothing to say besides this, how about you sit down?"

"Your majesty! Please hear me out for a little longer!!"

Edward was building up cold sweat on his forehead. He quivered as he wiped his sweat with his handkerchief. Those across from him let out cold muffled laughs. Edward fumbled around for another sheet of paper and softly said: "We've tried to negotiate with Castor, but their king rejected our kind offer to offer them protection and insisted on being left alone. I believe that we must control their finances if we wish to conquer them. First, we must limit the circulation of their currency in our country, limit its use and raise the price on goods from them. We must also forbid other countries from doing business with them..."

"Moron!!"

A young general across from him stood up. The medals and ribbon on his chest swayed with the movements of its owner angrily. It seemed that the empress was shocked but she didn't say anything.

Nier who was hidden in the dark sheathed her sword.

"Your majesty! Please stop this clown's pointless performance. Everything

Count Edward has said is ludicrous. I don't think he's still even handling matters pertaining to business!" The young man looked at Edward and angrily continued: "Your majesty..."

"Young man, I've never heard your voice before. Is this your first time here?"

The empress cut him off. She seemed to be slightly unhappy. The general next to the young man frowned at him, shook his head and let out a long sigh. The young man paused for a moment before nodding and replying: "Yes, your majesty. My father is sick today..."

"Ah, poor Charlemagne. He's getting on with age and is not very well. Send him my greetings when you return home. He's a retainer who went through the ups-and-downs with me after all. I won't threaten his descendants. Young man, remember well that this is the conference chamber, not some place for you to argue. I've got a tingling sensation in my ears today so don't yell."

"Understood..."

The young man lowered his head lifelessly. The people across from him laughed out loud. They mercilessly laughed at a young man who had come for the first time without knowing the rules. If it weren't on the account of his father, his head would probably be rolling on the ground right now.

"Continue with what you wanted to say."

The empress waited for the laughter to end before changing her posture. Her boots made a sonorous sound on the marble floor.

"Yes, your majesty. I am of the opinion that what Count Edward said was all wrong, because we cannot completely stop our business with Castor. Castor is close to the seas. Their salt and goods from the sea are warmly received by our people and their currency is comparable to our own in our country. If we forcibly remove their currency, lots of people will face losses. This will cause unhappiness with the people. Further, they will also retaliate while we cannot completely reject their goods and currency. As such, we will inevitably face losses ourselves."

A person in formal clothing stood up and criticised the young man: "Young man, there's no such thing as a win-win in business. We can replace Castor's

currency with our own and hand it to the people. Also, are you aware that we're on the losing side right now in terms of business with Castor? We're essentially donating money to them!"

The young man showed no hints of weakness and replied: "Since that's the case, we can't cut them off on the business front. We could conquer them with our strong army instead. Our army has never failed once. The might of our army can conquer any land. As long as we can put together an army, I'd stand our flag up on Castor's city walls in a single week's time!"

"How naïve!"

Another person from the formal clothing party criticised the young man and sternly said: "Is all that's in you fighters' brains battle? War requires monetary support. Do you know how much it costs to wage war for a week?"

"Our empire's treasury is infinite. It's only a week's worth of warfare funds."

"What a joke. Did you think about how to rule the place after we conquer it? We aren't committing a barbaric robbery. We have to rule the place after we conquer it. If we were to defeat Castor and they used the scorched Earth tactic before fleeing on ships, we'd be left with nothing but dirt and thin air. Their religions and culture are different to ours. We reside in the mainland so we don't have artisans to make ships. Without their artisans, how do we make warships? Furthermore, after we occupy the river delta, how many people will flee the flames of war? Do you know if the country will be able to flourish again like it is right now afterwards? When we rebuild Castor, fixing walls, ships, training troops and maintaining stability, we need money. Those things all require money! What about compensation for fallen soldiers and supplies for gear? Are you funding it?"

Edward looked at the young man who looked completely exasperated.

Another from the military party stood up and thundered: "Are you saying that her majesty's concerns aren't worth a pile of gold? Her majesty is grieved over the matter with Castor, but instead of thinking about how to help her, you're concerned with make more money? Your sense of loyalty is messed up. That's why I always say that those who haven't seen blood, those who didn't go through thick-and-thin with her majesty don't understand true glory! You

people aren't remotely loyal! You're worried about your own pockets!"

"What right do you have to be criticising us?! You keep calling us greedy but are you claiming you've never done anything shady with the military funds?! Do you people actually want to help her majesty? Isn't it the case that you people just want a war to make a name for yourselves?"

Another from the formal clothing party stood up and loudly scolded: "You never spared a thought for the thoughts of the soldiers. Soldiers have family, but you don't care about them dying on the battlefield, do you?"

The young man pointed his fingers at those across from him and swore loudly: "At least we aren't like you standing here pointing fingers. You people have said mouthfuls, but have you provided any practical plans that can actually be carried out?! When war breaks out, we're at the front, not like you people standing at the back drinking, partying and counting your money! You people are the shame of our empire!! You're all fucking bitches!! Fuck you all!"

"Show some respect young man. All of us here are your seniors."

The party in formal clothing didn't back down. They pointed back at the other party and went off: "You people think you're hot-shots, do you? You people are nothing but brutes! You people just don't understand that it's no longer an era where you go out and conquer lands anymore! We're in an era of stability. We're in an era of growth and development! The army now only has to protect the country. You people don't understand the concept of development! The country will come to ruin under your control one day!!"

"Ruin?! You bastards are the ones that'll be ruined! The empire was founded on our battles with her majesty! We'll ensure its eternal prosperity! On the contrary, what have you people contributed?! What can you contribute?! We don't have any good ideas, but we have a sure-fire method for success. You weak pigs don't have any rights to stand in the same category as us. Get the fuck out of this land for warriors!"

The young man lost it. He grabbed the cup of water before him and threw it at them. The young man from the formal clothing party didn't retreat and retaliated by throwing a cup back in their direction. The room immediately became chaotic with cups of water flying through the air and cussing over each

other. Luckily, the empress remained unharmed.

“Cough...”

An extremely faint cough could be heard as the fight reached its peak. Normally, no one would’ve heard the cough amidst all the fighting. In fact, the guards probably wouldn’t have been able to pull them apart, but as soon as the faint cough was made, everyone froze in place, and fearfully turned to look towards the throne.

The empress stood up and threw a kick. Perhaps she was feeling uncomfortable after sitting for an extended period. Nier walked up close to the throne and slightly bowed, completely ignoring the people below. She softly said: “The prince has reached the outside of the walls. Let us be on our way, your majesty.”

“Uhm...”

The empress nodded, then turned to the people down below to say: “Are you done fighting?”

“We sincerely apologise, your majesty!”

Everybody in the room looked at the shattered pieces of porcelain on the floor and quickly knelt down. The water that was slowly flowing around carried blood with it... The empress looked at them and softly said: “This is the conference chamber. It’s a place for national affairs to be discussed. You are my trusted retainers and this empire’s managers. Yet you dared to act violent and use foul language in such a sacred place. You made me look bad. Further, I did say I had a tingling sensation in my ears today and yet you all were screaming and shouting, adding to my frustration. My son is coming back today. I don’t want him to see your corpses as soon as he’s back. He’ll criticise me for killing indiscriminately again, so punish yourselves. Don’t make me personally have to do it.”

She aggressively waved her hands to pull open the black veil. Everyone present immediately lowered their heads. No one dared to raise his head. The empress’ beautiful face was in the open, her black hair swayed, and she puffed up her large breasts – by human standards – which looked like it would’ve burst through her military uniform. Her gaze was sharp as blades. She waved her

hand majestically and called: “Let us be on our way! I want to go see my son!”

Translator Note: Before I let you continue on to the comments section, I want to give a gentle reminder to not pester me for chapters. I’m not talking about the people asking genuine questions. I understand your enthusiasm for the series, but do not spam my inbox by posting on every chapter with: “When’s son-con”, “do this”, “do that”. There were two people who actually took the time to do that during the recent hiatus. I made and make my end of the deal very clear and I’ve always made good on it. Battoth, Carlo, Daniel, Slayer Monk, Alexander, Simon, nightmares, Ming Xu, matosz, Chris P. Duck, Christian, Anarchy Smillo and the list goes on. Everybody here and everybody else who I didn’t get to list – because there are a lot of you, all contributed towards improving my efforts, displayed genuine support and enthusiasm in some capacity. They aren’t making demands left and right, so you can take your demands to another galaxy. Sitting there with your arms folded and legs on the table as you make demands of me doesn’t help me translate more or release them any faster. There are issues I need your support with which in turn allow me fulfill those requests, and believe me, nobody ever lost a pound talking about it or thinking about it. Those are the people who made my craft better, make the existence of this website possible and help make it possible to try and release more by looking after me. Comment, show your enthusiasm, discuss and whatnot, and yell out if you find a mistake, but don’t harass our eyes with your spam. Thank you again for reading and supporting me. See you in tomorrow’s chapter!

Chapter 02

“So this is humanity’s empire...”

I said it without thinking when I’m human to begin with. Is this sort of sentiment something to be ashamed of? But you have to feel for me. I walked around in a forest for three whole days. All the places I passed by were small villages and small stockades. This is my first time seeing such a magnificent city since arriving at the plains.

I raised my head and looked at the towering city walls. They were definitely praiseworthy. The walls were so tall it’d be a real challenge to reach the top with a ladder.

If you look outside the city, you’ll see large, almost boundless farm land like a cluster of stars spread out across many small towns. They look like satellites orbiting the imperial city’s walls. I was actually told yesterday that I’d already reached the outskirts of the imperial capital. However, I got distracted and therefore only arrived within sight of the city walls in the afternoon. It felt like I walked from Beijing’s fifth ring road to the centre of the city. It was bustling even though it was the outskirts of the city.

The area close to the imperial capital was bustling. The people were busy and rowdy, symbolising the capital of the country. Even though they were small towns outside the capital, they were comparable to the capital, albeit without the city walls. Further outside the vicinity of the capital were large fields with rows of wheat that you’d never see the end of. The plains are better described as irrigated fields, they were completely different to the rugged forests I passed on the way here. Considering how humanity monopolizes all this rich land, it’s no wonder they’re prospering so much.

Horse carriages with people on-board and goods passed by me. There was also patrol cavalrymen dressed in cool white military uniforms using their blades to clear the way on their white horses who passed by me. All of that

overwhelmed me. But the one and only thing I found weird was that there was no squad sent out to welcome me at the border. I thought that someone would pick me up since I'm the prince.

But it's fine. I'm happier and have more freedom this way.

"Doo... Doo. Doo... Doo..."

Just as I was about to reach the doors to the city, a strange signal rang through the air from inside the city. I noticed the people in the surroundings pause for a moment when they heard it, and then quickly shuffle to the sides of the road and kneel down orderly with their heads down. All the cavalrymen and men directing the carriages also dismounted and got off the road. The cavalrymen got off their horses, and coaches dismounted their carriages and knelt in the middle of the road. In an instant, I was the only one left on my horse, completely dumbfounded.

The bustling street fell silent in an instant which reminded me of what an army officer said...

While I was still dumbfounded, the cavalryman kneeling closest to me loudly said: "Are you in your right mind?! Do you not value your life?!"

I froze. I had no idea what was going on, but I figured it was best that I not stay in the middle of the road, find a place to dismount and kneel down. I'm not some sort of great figure after all. Acting out of place would get me killed... Since I didn't have a party come pick me up, I guess my identity as the prince isn't that big of a deal.

But this goes to show that I'll be freer here with humanity since I don't have any special value. I can wander the streets and have fun as I like. The elves gave me Earth Dragon Scales and a bag of weird threads. They wanted me to find a skilled blacksmith who could create armour using it. Mom also reminded me to not control my mana on full-moon nights while here with humanity. She said to just let it out naturally and I'd be fine.

That's fair I guess. I mean, it's not like there'd be someone here who'd be there to suck my mana out.

Just as I was about to turn around and leave, a white horse from inside the

city doors rushed over. The white horse had a back tail that swayed along with the sound of its hooves like a suspended flag. The rider was dressed in military gear, while her white cape blew with the wind. Her exquisitely beautiful face and eyes were trained on me as she rushed towards me.

The girl was gorgeous. She was definitely a rarity among Chinese girls because she prefers military uniform over fancy makeup. The cavalry armour looked beautiful on her. There were no excessive decorations on her green clothing, just two leather belts for formal clothing, but the leather belts couldn't cover her glorious bosom. The horse stirrups where her feet were didn't have a speck of dust. There wasn't even so much as a crease on the breeches. I noticed the laces on her black boots on the stirrups were loose... Miss, you're definitely not in the cavalry, right?! There's no way you are! She wore a bicorn on her head which looked like the sumptuous ones from European lines during war times.

Her white cape was like icing on the cake which further enhanced her heroic spirit. Sorry, let me redescribe her. If Lucia was considered beautiful, then the female cavalry in military uniform before me is valiant. Lucia would make people want to treat her gently while she would gain people's respect.

"Stop!!"

She pulled the reins on her white steed and looked at the only person still on the street, me, and slowly trotted over. I paused for a moment, but then retreated a few steps out of fear when I saw the hanging sabre on her left. When combined with what I was told before, I presume they're getting people off the streets for some sort of celebration.

She stopped her horse, looked at me and approached the front of my horse. I saw her emerald eyes which had no compassion in them whatsoever. Lucia's half-shut eyes just looked tired, but there was at least some form of life in them. But the girl before me had no soul in her eyes. It was just a black hole sucking in all the light.

What a pity... She has beautiful eyes.

As she walked up to my horse, I felt slightly awkward and wanted to apologise, but before I could speak, she aggressively lifted up her cloak which made a flapping sound. She then went down on one knee, pressed her right

hand to her chest, lowered her head, and with her nice yet emotionless voice loudly said: “Welcome your majesty! I, Nier Gilliante, have come to take pick you up! Her majesty is just behind me. Please follow me into the city!”

“Ah... Oh... O-... Okay...”

“May fortune smile upon her majesty. May she be in good health and let her awe live on forever!”

The shouts of the crowd nearby scared my horse and I fought to bring it back under control while staring at the crowd dumbfounded. So the crowd behaved so respectfully because the empress was coming. I take back what I said before though. It’s a fairly grandiose welcoming if the empress herself is coming to pick me up.

“Umm... I’m riding a horse...”

“You must dismount then. How can you ride a horse in her majesty’s presence?! You must respect her even if you’re the prince! You’re not above the system just because you’re her kin.”

This girl named Nier was very serious... She took my horse reins. I didn’t detect any emotion in her eyes but why I do I get the feeling that she sees me as an enemy...?

“Son, you must remember that that woman from humanity is extremely violent and eccentric. You must be wary of her even though you’re her son because who knows what she’ll do when she gets mad. Also, be careful of her sweet-talk!”

I remember mom reminded me when I left... I implanted the image of a tyrant in my head so many times, and now that I’m seeing this scene, I sort of believe mom’s words now... I just pray that my human mom is a bit normal... Please don’t be a tyrant and kill me ...

I trembled with thrill as I entered the city. I have no idea what sort of mom is awaiting me...

Chapter 03

The city doors were much sturdier than I imagined. There were double doors, so if one was broken down, there'd still be another layer of doors inside. The defences were basically the same as the elf capital. I suppose both races had similar thought processes when building their city walls.

As we went down the street, a very luxurious horse carriage was stopped in the middle of the road. Every one of the horses were white. Not a single strand of fur had been contaminated with another colour. I think the body of the carriage was made out of Rosewood. How do I know that? It's because I've seen that type of wood in the Forbidden City. There was a beautiful pattern engraved on it. I believe that gold was poured onto it after the pattern was carved on. The gold pattern shined brilliantly under the light of the sun rays.

There were two cavalrywomen by the carriage. Both of them had chest plates that were blindingly shiny. They stood silently by the carriage. They didn't utter a word. In fact, they didn't budge. They were motionless like statues. But as I said, they were females just like Nier. Nier extended her arm out and stopped me. She then took a big step forward, went down on one knee and respectfully said: "Your majesty, the prince is here."

The curtain of the carriage got pulled open and I heard a calm voice. The voice sounded beautiful like the sounds of nature. Someone with such a beautiful voice must be a beauty. But even though it was a female's voice, it carried a dignified tone that you couldn't help but obey. Is this what majestic means?

"Pull back the black veil!"

Nier seemed to have got frightened. Surprised, she raised her head and exclaimed: "Your majesty!"

"I said, pull it back. I'm his mother. What sort of mother hides behind a black

veil when her child is right before her?”

The empress sounded slightly annoyed. Nier paused before walking over to the carriage, tippy-toeing and pulling back the black veil by the window. What’s the purpose of the black veil...? Is it to prevent others from seeing the empress? They weren’t this fussy in the elf nation. Didn’t I run freely through the streets even as a prince?

Ah... I take that back. I didn’t get to run free on the streets. But that was because mom was over-protective!

“Come over here, my son. Let me get a proper look at you.”

Nier retreated to one side and ignored me. I scanned my surroundings because I still felt a sense of fear. This is so much scarier than when I saw my elf mom. Mom is a queen but she’s approachable so I quickly accepted her. But I’m frankly quite scared of approaching this dignified empress who’s calling me her son and telling me to come over.

Nier didn’t speak, but I could read her lips contemptuously warning me: “Hurry up!”

I quivered as I walked towards the carriage. There was a very big window to the side of the carriage. Inside, a face so beautiful it was virtually mythical, scanned the surroundings outside. It was different to the elves. It was a human face. No, it was what humans considered unbelievably beautiful. Her facial features were aligned as if somebody calculated their placement and shape with a super-computer. Her white skin was so exquisite I really wanted to touch it. A mean pair of black eyes unlike my elf mom’s gentle blue eyes scanned me. Everywhere she looked at felt uncomfortable like I was being stabbed with a sharp knife.

Her rosy lips were thin like a blade and formed the shape of a strange smile. As opposed to saying that she was glad to see her child returning home, it’d be more accurate to say that she was looking at a fun pet to play with. She didn’t wear a skirt or formal clothing. Instead she wore a very simple and unadorned blue military uniform. The buttons right at the top of her collar were done up tightly, but her bosom looked like it was going to burst forth from underneath her clothing.

The size of her bosom was surprising even when compared with the elves.

I... I can't feel a hint of motherly love...

What should I say...?

"Come closer."

Her fingers were white, slender and long. But between her thumb and forefinger, the thenar space, were calluses. She stroked my head... No... It was nothing like the gentle and considerate type of stroke my elf mom gave me. She was putting a lot of her strength into "stroking" my head... Are you really my mom? Why don't I feel any motherly love at all...?

"Uhm, it's been a long and tiring trip for you, my son. I'm glad to see you back safe and sound. Return to the palace and rest up."

She pulled her hand back and sat back in the carriage properly leaving me with a beautiful silhouette.

That's it?! That's it?! That felt like she didn't even do anything! I figured you'd have some sort of special motherly love for me since you went to war over me! Why do I feel like you came here just to fulfil the responsibility of a job...? Are you sure this is the woman that fought with the elves a decade ago over me? Are you positive it's her?

"Let's go."

Nier pulled me to the side or else I would've been trampled by the horses.

"Allow me to reintroduce myself. I am Nier Gilliante. I am her majesty's bodyguard, a Valkyrie. I am the sword instructor for the first squad and their captain. I am tasked with protecting you during your stay here."

I went with Nier, shoulder-to-shoulder. Nier rode on horseback with her back straight. Textbook posture if you like.

"Ah... Right..."

I nodded as I looked at Nier. Since I had a fiancé in the elf nation, do I have one here? I looked at Nier and asked her with the intent of testing her: "Hey, uhh... Nier..."

“Please call me Gilliante.”

She coldly cut me off...

I replied with a derided smile: “But I feel Nier is easy to say.”

“Have it your way.”

“Nier... Umm... What sort of relationship do we have?”

“I told you at the start. I am your bodyguard.”

“No, I mean... In that way...”

“Please be articulate as to what way. Please pardon my foolishness, but I don’t understand your question.”

“Well, uhh... For example... Lovers...”

Nier finally showed some expression in her eyes... But it was a look of disdain like I was trash, like I was the disgusting mud on a horse’s hooves... She always faced me and answered my questions without being overbearing previously, but after my question just now, she looked at me disgusted... I felt like my pride just took a big hit...

Has anybody ever told you that your gaze hurts people?!

Nier looked at me sternly and said: “No, we don’t share any relationship. It’s just that you were protected by others during your previous visits. I haven’t heard of you having any fiancés or lovers either. Please try and maintain your dignity as a prince. By that I mean, be considerate in the way you handle matters and interact with the opposite sex. Do not ruin the environment in the palace or her majesty’s reputation.”

“Yes... You’re right...”

Is there a problem with my identity?! Did they get it wrong?! How did it end up with my bodyguard completely drilling me?! How did it end up with my bodyguard bossing me around...? I truly suspect that I’ve come to a fake kingdom, with a fake mom and a fake bodyguard...

The carriage went down the road. The civilians by the side remained kneeling and didn’t dare to raise their heads. There were only wishes of good fortune

like a tsunami. Isn't it the norm for civilians to be scattering flowers into the air in these situations? This is very formal and whatnot, but it feels oppressive as well...

The palace was right at the centre of the capital. I was so shocked I couldn't speak. The design and size of the building could compare to the Forbidden City. I think the main door of the palace was made from gold. At the very top, there was a twin-headed eagle carved from gold looking at both sides majestically, which reminded me of Russia. Below the twin heads were some words. I originally wouldn't have understood it, but I do now.

Long live your majesty.

That's what the text below the twin-headed eagle said.

When I entered the palace, it felt like I entered the Forbidden City. It was built in a European style, but the layout and scale of could only be matched by the Forbidden City. Inside, you could see countless beautiful little forests and gurgling streams. You could see ancient and beautiful stone bridges on the road. The architecture was comparable to that found in the elf nation's palace. There were many different types of people in beautiful clothing going back and forth in the palace.

We were headed towards a palace which was magnificent as the Great Kremlin Palace. The carriage passed a large plaza, went around said palace and continued onwards at the back. We however, stopped at the front of this palace.

"Servants, come and help the prince rest up. I have to go and see her majesty."

Nier dismounted and passed the reins to the servant who came over without much thought. Another servant congratulatory helped me dismount and then said: "Your majesty, please come to the outer chamber."

Huh? I don't live with the empress? No wonder why we don't have any feelings towards each other. Family members not living together and having so many rules... My elf mom feels so close because she loves me like a mother, while the empress before me...

I can only sense her majestic aura as an empress...

Well, whatever... I looked at the surrounding architecture and praised it. This is basically a European version of the Forbidden City.

Current time in the inner chamber.

“Ah.....”

Nier stood to one side and looked expressionlessly at the empress who fell onto her bed as soon as she got back as if she died.

“I messed up! I messed up! Ahhh!! Why do I get so nervous in front of him that I can’t even speak?! I want to give him a hug and kiss him too... Ahh!! He didn’t even call me mom! He must hate me! He must hate me for not being anything like a mom...”

The empress hugged her pillow and rolled around on her bed like a young girl who’d just seen her crush but couldn’t find the courage to speak to him and was now regretting it.

“Your majesty, you shouldn’t refer to yourself as ‘mom’...”*

“I know, I know... But I messed up again!! I want to be able to hug my son whenever I want like that woman... Aaahhh! Why am I so stupid...? Why do I have to act tough like that...?! Aaahhh! I fail as a mother! I want to be a good mom too... I upset my son again!!”

“I will leave for now...”

Nier knew that the empress was in no condition to handle anything when she was in that mode. The empress who gets so nervous upon seeing her son she doesn’t know what to do, always regrets her actions after the act and hates herself like this for a long time...

It takes roughly three hours for her to get over her it... Probably just three...

Glossary

*She was telling her to use the method of referring to oneself emperors and kings use (朕) because she was referring to herself as “mom”.

Bonus: Follow the link below to view best girl, Nier’s in-depth profile.

Chapter 04

Translator Comments: Hey all, if you haven't rated or reviewed the series on Novel Updates, it'd be awesome if you could take some time to. Let's share the greatness of Son-con to more people! Patrons, new chapter for you all tomorrow. Everybody else, see you the day after guys!

Chapter Start...

The outer chamber should be called a palace or a castle as opposed an outer chamber. As soon as I entered, I was shocked when I found that the large chamber which was decorated resplendently and luxuriously. I had to go up flights of stairs to reach my room which was on the fourth floor. No, you didn't misread that. This whole palace, this so-called outer chamber only had a single room which was mine. The other rooms were showrooms, living rooms or music rooms. There were also all sorts of pointless sets of armour and paintings hung up as decoration.

I'm living alone in this huge castle?! There are housekeepers and servants, but they all live underground. They don't come up to the surface unless there's something that requires their attendance.

I looked at the massive room before me that was like the size of two classrooms and flipped through the books on the table. I don't know who prepared them but they were primarily literature books. The bed was much more exquisite and luxurious than the one at the elf nation. When I jumped onto the large mattress, it was like I got swallowed up by it...

Will I be able to wake up tomorrow if I spend the night sleeping on this bed...?

I lay on the bed, sighed and spaced out while looking at the roof above me. Humanity's empire is a bit different to what I imagined. Actually, it's more accurate to say that as a human myself, I find it hard to understand this place. I mean, for a mother who went to war with a neighbouring country for her kid, shouldn't she be excited at the sight of seeing her son? This empress however virtually gave me the cold shoulder thereby putting me in a dilemma. On one hand, there's a huge difference to what I expected. On the other hand, I'll have a large degree of freedom while here.

Moreover, I just can't feel at ease here. There's the majestic empress and the cold female bodyguard. I think I'll go nuts if I don't find some sort of entertainment here. I don't get much freedom in the elf nation, but running around in the palace with Lucia is fun. However, my Lucia isn't here with me.

I've only got a cold female bodyguard...

Knock. Knock.

"Come in."

I sat up as the door got pushed opened. The black-haired female bodyguard flicked her hair, looked at me, bowed and said: "Your majesty, her majesty has invited you to lunch with her. Please come with me."

"Umm, Nier!"

Nier turned her head around and asked: "Is something the matter, your majesty?"

"Well, uhh... Is my outfit appropriate?"

I was wearing the clothes placed on my bed which really matched the empress's tastes. It was a sky blue and white military uniform but slightly modified. It seemed like everybody here wore boots, but they were quite comfortable when worn. I don't really know how to wear clothing made during this period properly. I just tried it on. I don't know if it suits the occasion or not.

Nier looked at me and then walked up to me from the front. She reached out and adjusted my bow tie by my chest. I raised my head and my eyes made their way to Nier subconsciously who was very close up to me. Nier's face is really pretty. Perfect actually, as if it were a statue with her features carved that way deliberately. But at the same time, her face lacked the compassion a statue lacks. Her eyes didn't look as serious as the empress. She should look radiant if she were to smile like Lucia when she's happy. She probably never uses perfumes, but she had an elegant fragrance on her.

"Done. Please pay attention to the position of your buttons and bow tie next time."

Nier took a step back and turned around. Her army sabre hanging on her waist swung through the air dangerously as she turned. I was distracted for a moment. My sensitive senses given to me by the elves made me notice a drip of blood run down her scabbard dangerously. It wasn't a large drop of blood. It was just a thin layer of blood, but that was evidence that Nier had just killed somebody.

I called her again: “Nier! What’s with the blood on your sword?”

Nier turned her head around and casually replied: “A maid entered her majesty’s room prior to receiving permission, so I killed her.”

I stared at her flabbergasted: “You killed her just because of that?!”

Nier looked at me and righteously said: “That’s right. Is that not enough? She barged into her majesty’s room without permission and even saw her majesty in that state, so I had to kill her to prevent her from spilling what she saw. I believe that was the right thing to do. I also believe that you don’t have the authority to criticise me because we Valkyries receive our orders directly from her majesty. You have no right to question us.”

Killing someone is no big deal to her. Killing people for her majesty was as normal as it gets. Her world view, philosophies and values are completely different to mine.

“.....”

Alright, I’m speechless... What else can I say? If that’s what her majesty commanded you to do, then it also means she agreed to it. In other words, she’s as savage as my mom told me... I knew mom wouldn’t lie to me! My mom wasn’t maligning her, it’s the truth!!

I’m about to go and have lunch with a wolf!!

“Please come with me, your majesty, we’re running late and making her majesty wait.”

“Okay!!”

I was scared... This was no longer about freedom but my life itself!! Humanity is scary! I want to return to the elves! Mom doesn’t let me go out, but she’d only spank me if I angered her. She wouldn’t even think of killing me! I stayed with the elves for only a month and mom only got angry once. She didn’t burn Lucia to death either. But in just an hour after arriving here, someone’s already been killed!

Right now in the dining hall...

The empress paced back and forth in the dining hall, biting her thumbnail as

she looked around the dining hall. The head chef looked at her anxious expression and asked: “Are you feeling really nervous, your majesty?”

“Yeah... My son is about to get here... What do I need to prepare...? Hmmm... The wine has been prepared, right...? The dishes are ready as well, right...? Oh... That’s right! I... I need to get him some auspicious meat stew... And there was also... Right! Wine... Wine... What shall I wish him...? I... I wish you the best of health? I hope that you grow up soon? No. No. He’s already eighteen years, two months and fifteen days old already... He’s already an adult...”

“The prince has arrived...”

“Kyaaah!!”

The empress who was in deep thought got a fright from the sudden voice that spoke out. She rushed towards the main seat and settled down. She took a deep breath, gently rubbed her face and softly said: “It’s okay, it’s okay. Don’t be scared. Don’t be scared... Don’t be nervous, he’s your own son. He’s your son. Calm down, calm down... What should a normal mother do?!!!”

That’s right. The empress has always been a swordswoman. She led the cavalry against enemy armies many times when she was eighteen years old. Her accolades from war are incomparably glorious. Her accomplishments far supersede the emperors before her.

However, she has no idea how to carry out the duties of a proper qualified mother.

“This is the dining hall. I hope you and her majesty enjoy your meal.”

“Aren’t you coming in with me?!”

Nier gave me a weird look and said: “It’s your lunch with her majesty, I can’t enter. If you need me for something, just call for me.”

No... That’s not it... I’m not asking you to eat with me. The thought of eating alone with her majesty scares me and makes me tense.

At that time, I had no idea that right now, behind this white door inlaid with gold and pearls, was somebody who was even more tense and nervous than I was...

Chapter 05

There were only two of us at the long table. Her majesty didn't permit anybody from entering other than those serving up food, probably to put me at ease. In other words, it was a meal with just the two of us present.

The awkward atmosphere was suffocating. It seemed like I was breathing in colloids as opposed to oxygen... Neither of us spoke and I noticed that the empress had her eyes trained on me the whole time which was really creepy... Her eyes didn't show kindness. A better description would be that it seemed as though she had killing intent between her eyebrows from all the years of killing... And right now, those eyes were staring at me. Even a soldier would tremble at her gaze. I was worried she'd suddenly pull out a sabre and slice me up...

This isn't the feast at Hong Gate is it...?*

I gave it my all to swallow the meat stew and looked at my now empty bowl. The stew tasted... Horrible... I came here from another dimension where I could eat boat-loads and you're getting me to eat this weird as hell meat stew? It tastes terrible and was really salty. Lucky I finished it on my first bowl and don't have to continue. Next I'll eat...

BANG!

Her majesty suddenly slammed her hand on the table and stood up. I was so frightened I was ready to kneel down on the floor. I dropped my knife and fork on my plate which created a clunk sound. I looked at the empress who just suddenly stood up, clueless as to what she wanted. She stared right at me. She then aggressively and quickly reached her hand out towards me.

I shut my eyes.

Shit! My life is hanging in the balance!

The empress aggressively picked up my empty bowl in front of me and then pulled the pot on the table over with one hand. She then took a deep breath and wore an expression as if she were performing a religious ritual. She carefully picked up the stew spoon and filled my bowl up to the brim, and placed it before me. I looked at the stew before my eyes, jaw-dropped, as it swished around in the bowl gently. I then looked at her completely confused.

The empress on the other hand wore an expression of relief. In fact, it seemed like she was proud of herself. She smiled and sat down. She then patted her face hard.

She quietly muttered: "I did it! I did it! I did it!"

But since there were only two of us in the hall, I heard her...

Uhh.....

Aren't you referring to yourself incorrectly?*

Thank god. Thank god. It looks like her majesty treats me kindly. Well, at least she's kind enough to fill up my bowl for me... Should I return the favour then? Yeah, she's my mom at the end of the day. Although I can't accept her right away, I still should fulfil my responsibility as her son...

I picked up the knife for cutting up bread and sliced a piece... I don't know what to give her! There was only so much on the table and this was all I could think of! I placed the slice in front of her with my two quivering hands. She froze for a moment and looked at me. Her black shining eyes glimmered as if she couldn't believe her eyes. She pursed her lips and asked: "This is..."

"Umm... Your majesty... If you don't mind... Aaaahhh!! Don't cry! Don't Cry!!!"

Why is she suddenly crying?! Why did she cry after I handed her a slice of bread?! She grabbed the slice of bread, crushed it in her hand and put it into her mouth. She chewed on it as she cried. Big droplet after big droplet fell from her eyes full of murderous intent scaring me, who was sitting in his seat so much that I didn't dare to move.

"Uwaahhh!! My... My... My Son gave me bread.... Uwahhh!!! My son has accepted me! My son shared food with me!"

The empress hid her face as she cried, but I could see the corner of her mouth form a happy smile like a little kid...

Umm... You don't have to over-react like that, do you...? And aren't you still referring to yourself incorrectly?!

Maybe... Maybe this empress isn't as violent as I thought... But shouldn't she get her mental health checked?

She cried for a few minutes before stopping... I sat there in a daze the whole time without daring to budge an inch. She finally stopped. She wiped her tears by the corner of her eyes, laughed gently and said: "Sorry, my son. I've shown you an embarrassing side of myself..."

No. No. No. I don't think embarrassing is the right word here. More like strange, don't you think?!

I lowered my head and replied: "No... It's nothing, your majesty..."

"But I'm very happy. I'm really happy to see you... You've just come back from that other woman. No matter what you say, living with the elves can't compare to being in your own home here, right? Eat up, son. Here, let me get you another bowl."

The empress excitedly stood up and looked at me with her glistening eyes. Under the pressure of her gaze, I lifted my bowl up, fought the strange taste of the meat stew and gulped it down mouthful after mouthful... Just who qualified this chef? If you can't cook, you might as well grill meat like the elves. The elves may enjoy eating fruits and plants for the most part, but I love their wine and food. You're a human and yet you can't cook. You're an embarrassment!

The empress elatedly filled my bowl up...

"Here, here, here. Eat up, my son..."

"Don't stand on ceremony, my son. Let me get you another bowl."

"Son, you look like you've been losing weight. Eat some more meat to nourish your body."

.....

"Your majesty... I beg you, please don't give me anymore... It tastes... Really

disgusting... I'm feeling a bit sick now..."

I frowned, flopped my torso onto the table and grabbed my belly. I felt like I'd see the stew a second time if I moved. I was exhausting myself to prevent myself from regurgitating it... I honestly can't take it anymore. Kill me if it pleases you. I really can't do this anymore! This is virtually torture. Torture!

The empress's smile receded a little. When she saw my uncomfortable expression, she placed the stew spoon down and gently coughed. The door swung open and Nier was at the door. She respectfully bowed and then asked: "Did you need something, your majesty?"

"Come here, Nier."

The empress's expression and tone returned to being cold and domineering. Her eyes showed her infuriation. I felt like she was slowly reaching her limit. The air around her itself was screaming for mercy. In an instant, the atmosphere turned incomparably oppressive and heavy. Is this the anger of a sovereign? Is she going to commit a mass homicide? ...It looks like I made a mistake... But who cares. You can do with me as you please. I'd rather die than have any more of that stew.

Nier walked up to the empress's side. She whispered a few words to Nier, and then Nier turned and left. I sat up and Nier walked past me from behind. She didn't say anything and left the room, quietly closing the door behind her.

Eh? She wasn't finding fault with me?

"Sorry, my son, I got a little bit worked up."

You're always worked up!!

I shook my head, smiled meekly and said: "It's fine, your majesty..."

She looked at me as if she wanted to say something. Her lips budged slightly, and then she pursed them tightly and said: "How's that woman doing?"

I lowered my head slightly and respectfully replied: "Oh, you mean mo-... my mother? My mother is well, please don't worry, your majesty."

Her eyes had a hint of both sadness and hope as though my answer hurt her and triggered her somewhat, but I have no idea what I said wrong. She kept

silent for a long time as she looked at me and let out a heavy sigh.

She muttered: “Forget it... We can’t rush it...”

She then rubbed her face, smiled again and said: “Now that you’re home, let me know if you need anything. I will satisfy your desires. Does anything come to mind right now? Say for instance, some sort of thing or... Hmm... A girl that you fancy? I’ll organise it for you...”

“Oh... No, there’s no need, your majesty... However, could I ask... For Nier to live with me?”

I realised how potentially misleading what I said could be as I blurted it out, but it was too late... I just wanted to have Nier stay by my side! I don’t have any feelings towards her! The important part is that she kills people too casually while with the empress so it’ll be better for her to stay with me... I truly hope that a beauty like her won’t become a killer who doesn’t bat an eye. That’d be such a pity.

“Nier? Why?”

The empress looked at me confused.

“Can’t you be a bit stronger?! You’re my son!”

She slammed her hand violently on the table. I was so scared I almost fell out of my chair due to weak knees. I quickly stood up, lowered my head and apologised; “Sorry. Sorry, your majesty... I... I understand... I’ll overcome it...”

“Hmph!”

She got up and left with a wave of her hand. I was left standing there awkwardly until I heard the sound of the door shut behind her as she left. Only then did I finally ease up and sit back down in my chair...

What exactly did I say wrong...?

In the bedroom of the inner chamber...

“AAAAHH!!! What have I done?! What have I done?! Our relationship had just improved a little!! Why did I go and shout at my son... AAAHH!!! I’m such an idiot! I’m so stupid I should just go die! What sort of mom lashes out at her son for no rhyme or reason!! Aaahh!! I’m such a failure of a mother! My son is so

cute and even shared some bread with me, so why did I yell at him... He clearly said he was lonely, so I could've just taken the opportunity to get him to move in with me and everything would've been fine! He calls that other woman mom but not me because of my stupidity!! Aaahh!!! If I had gotten him to move in then I would've been able to see him every day!!! I'm such a super-ultra-hyper idiot! Why did I have to go and get jealous of Nier?! I could've just gotten him to move in with me and it'd be fine! He must be so upset and lonely right now! It's all my fault as his mom! I'm not worthy of being a mom!!"

On the second day, something which never happened since the establishment of the empire until now, happened. The empress didn't turn up for the conference... The reason was... She was supposedly not well...

Of course, that was the day after...

That changed Nier's perception of the world.

Someone actually managed to hate on themselves for more than twenty-four hours...

Glossary

*A historical event that took place in 206 BC at Hong Gate (鸿门) outside Xianyang, the capital of the Qin dynasty.

**Again with the common "I" and "I" for an emperor

Chapter 06

Well, that's how our lunch ended. I was left completely mind-boggled as to why her majesty got so mad. Perhaps it was due to the way I put my question when I said I was lonely and wanted a girl to accompany me. Maybe females take offense to it.

But I genuinely don't want to let Nier continue killing people. While it's true that Lucia has threatened a lot of people, I've never once seen her actually kill somebody. Nier's beauty is not beneath Lucia's and if you don't mind me being a bit more biased towards humanity, I'd say Nier is prettier than Lucia. However, Nier's eyes and cold expression ruins her beauty.

If one kills too many, they'll become numb towards life. If they become numb towards life, they'll lose interest in life. If Nier continues down that path, she'll become a killing machine instead of a girl. I honestly feel pain for her. She's a girl just like Lucia so why are their lives the complete opposite of each other? Lucia can run around with wine and rabbit thighs happily, choose her fragrance bag and scent, but Nier only carries the scent of blades and blood.

Girls should be surrounded with the scent of flowers not blood.

I don't have the confidence I can save her, and I'm not as gentle or good at moving people like the main protagonist from a Manhua. Nier is so far away from me I couldn't embrace her if I wanted. The best I can do is keep her away from bloodshed. I can stop her from killing people if she stays beside me.

I can't save her, but I can perhaps hold her back.

As I was lost in my own thoughts, I found that I'd strolled to the inside of a long corridor... Okay. I'm lost and have no idea where this is... I checked left and right. Both sides looked like quiet woods some place far away. There were stones laid about. This place should be part of a flower garden or something,

right?

On one side of the corridor was an artificial lake. It wasn't large but the water was very clear. It was surrounded by large round rocks which looked very natural. I felt closer to home when I saw it because it was one of the rare Eastern elements amongst all this Western architecture. I might as well go check it out since I'm lost anyway. I crossed the long hall with handrails along both sides and went over to it.

There was somebody on top of the rock. No. It was a young girl in a pink skirt. She had light blonde hair done up in a bun. Judging from her physique, she should probably be around eight or nine. Her face was round like a goose egg. She was pretty like a doll.

It is a known fact by the public that I don't have corrupt thoughts towards those younger than myself, so I won't be caught screaming "Wooww! A blonde loli!" And then charge over there and take her away.

I saw her crawl on top of the rock and reach her hand out towards the lake as far as she could like she was trying to grab something. However, her tiny arms couldn't reach it. I went over, looked at the surface of the lake and noticed a very crudely made doll... If you can even consider a teru teru bozu a doll... Floating on top of the water.

It wasn't actually far away, but for the loli it was.

I walked up to the loli, bent over to pick up a small wooden stick and said: "If you don't mind, let me help you."

The loli turned her head around. She scanned me with her round eyes, and then nodded, retreated to one said, and said: "Thank you..."

"It's nothing."

I knelt down on top of the rock and used the small wooden stick to try and get the doll which resembled a teru teru bozu. It was like somebody took a single shabby piece of cloth, sewed it together and called it a doll. I got rid of the water in it, handed the doll to the loli and said: "Be careful not to drop it in there again."

The loli took the doll. It was just a shabby doll and yet she hugged it like it was

a treasure. She didn't care that it was wet. She looked at me with a bright and cute smile, energetically nodded and said: "Uhm! I'll keep that in mind! Thank you, big brother!!"

I laughed as I waved my hand and said: "Sure. But I want to ask you, how do I get to the outer chamber?"

She paused for a moment. Confused, she scanned me with her blue eyes and said: "Are you looking for his majesty? At the moment, only his majesty lives there..."

I helplessly laughed and said: "And that's me..."

"YOU'RE HIS MAJESTY?!"

She revealed a look of surprise and walked around me to examine me. She then returned before me and excitedly said: "You're her majesty's son?! Ah! Yes! No wonder why you're so gentle and so handsome! You really are her majesty's son!"

I laughed embarrassingly as I touched my head and said: "Ah... I guess..."

She then gave me a nod and said: "Please follow me. It's a bit of a challenge to explain, so just follow me. It's quite amazing that you managed to end up here while you were lost."

"I was lost in my thoughts... I just kept walking and found myself here before I knew it. Thank you, little girl."

"Little girl?"

She specifically emphasised those words and then the corner of her mouth turned into a smile completely uncharacteristic for her age, but the smile quickly disappeared. I only noticed it due to my elf eyesight! There's definitely a problem with you, isn't there?! There's definitely a problem with you! You're not a loli, are you?!

"Bzzz..."

Just as I was about to unleash a verbal attack, a bee suddenly flew over. It hesitated at first but then rushed over towards the loli. Perhaps it mistook her pink skirt for a flower...

“AAAHHH!! A bee!!”

After she shrieked, she turned away and threw a punch which accurately hit and killed the bee flying over. The bee violently crashed into the rock behind it. That rock had text engraved on it. Even if it weren't granite, it was still a huge rock nonetheless...

A loud rumble filled the air as if the Earth were being split. The entire massive rock was smashed to pieces by a single punch from the loli... Nope, you didn't misread it. Not broke, not sent flying but a strong punch in between that shattered the ENTIRE rock to pieces... Dust from the rock flew all over the place. The loli proudly clapped her hands, looked at the shattered rock and proudly said: “Uhm! Let's see if you dare come me again! Sorry for the embarrassing sight, your majesty. Please follow me. I'll take you to the outer chamber now!”

“Alright!!”

I quivered from head to toe as I looked at the shattered rock before me. I then looked at the unharmed loli and felt like my entire belief system had just taken a big hit again...

You may not believe me but a loli that only comes up to my waist, and that you could pick up with one arm just smashed a rock bigger than me. No. It should be called a boulder. She smashed a boulder with one punch. This loli could roll up her sleeves and laugh while saying to lolicons: “Hey jii-san, please don't impose your horny thoughts on me, or my punch may kill you~”

You really will die! You really will die!! You'll die a death worse than that bee!!

I've definitely run into a fake loli! She's definitely a fake!!

Glossary

*Jii-san = uncle in Japanese

Chapter 07

We arrived at the outer chamber entrance. The loli turned around, smiled and said: “This is the outer chamber, your majesty. As you’re not too familiar with the palace, it’s best that you get somebody to accompany you.”

I still couldn’t erase the image of the shattered boulder from my mind... I looked at the loli in front of me and with my trembling voice, asked: “Th-... Thank you... Umm... C-could you tell me your name?”

“Aah... I’m so absentminded! I sincerely apologise, your majesty. Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Alice Gilliante! It is my pleasure to meet you, your majesty. I wish you well.”

She politely lifted her skirt, elegantly smiled and saluted me formally. She then raised her head, smiled at me brightly and said: “I’m pleased to meet you, your majesty.”

“Gilliante?! ”

I got surprised. I remember Nier’s surname was Gilliante. Could she be Nier’s younger sister?

“Is something the matter?”

I scratched my head while smiling and said: “Oh, no. I was just thinking... Your surname is the same as Nier Gilliante. I was wondering if you were her younger sister or something...”

When she heard Nier’s name, she proudly folded her arms, nodded and said: “Oh... Nier! She’s very skilled with the sword, she’s beautiful and she’s very loyal to her majesty. If she were my daughter, then it’d be perfect. But it’s a pity that all of us Valkyries share the surname ‘Gilliante’. That’s the surname her majesty bestowed us with, so regardless of our names, we all share the surname Gilliante.”

“Huh? Wait!!! Did you just say it’d be perfect if Nier were your daughter?! Daughter?! Daughter?!”

“That’s right.” She looked at me seriously and pulled out a fan from an unbelievable place... How did you keep it there when your chest is flat as a pancake? She looked at me then couldn’t help but laugh and said: “I’m a veteran retainer of her majesty. I’m one of the people close enough to her that I’m permitted to refer to myself as I*. I’m the captain of the Valkyries, your majesty. You got fooled too, didn’t you? Hahaha... I’m the same age as her majesty. I’m the same age as your mother!!”

She couldn’t hold it in any longer and burst out in laughter. I feel like my philosophies, world view and values have been challenged once again. People always talk about legal lolis but I never expected legal lolis to be an actual thing! And this legal loli can even shatter boulders with one punch! Have you ever seen this sort of loli before?!

“Sorry your majesty. I must leave first to attend to some matters. You gave me a very good impression of yourself. You’re neither one with wild ambitions nor a playboy. You’re very polite and simple. You won’t pose any threat to her majesty so I won’t have to worry. Goodbye, your majesty...”

She pursed her lips into a smile and walked past me. I stood there in a daze as I watched her small back disappear, and pinched my thigh as hard as I could...

THAT HURTS!!

At the inner chamber...

“Captain!”

Nier turned around, looked at the loli with the pink skirt that just arrived, and politely bowed.

Alice smiled and waved back. She then opened her fan, looked towards the front of the door and said: “Nier~ I met his majesty today. He’s a really interesting boy. He doesn’t have any wild ambitions and isn’t a threat for her majesty. He’s a very weak and normal teenager. You don’t have to treat him as an enemy. Just leave him be, he won’t be a threat to her majesty.”

Nier straightened up and replied: “Is that so? I feel that way too.”

Alice looked at Nier with a smile and said: "But Nier. Since her majesty ordered you to protect him, why aren't you living with him?"

Nier bit down on her lip. She looked extremely dissatisfied as she said: "I don't want to protect his majesty. I want to protect her majesty like the rest of you. Whether his majesty is alive or dead has nothing to do with us."

"So you decided to slack off? That's not good, Nier. His majesty is her majesty's only son after all. Her majesty won't be happy if something happens to him. She didn't arrange for you to be his bodyguard because she wanted to abandon you and distance herself from you. To the contrary, that's a sign of her trust towards you. She trusts you enough to entrust the safety of her son to you. A mother must be very trusting towards someone to make such a decision. So don't be dissatisfied about it. You should feel honoured."

"Is that so?"

Nier nodded, pondered over what Alice said for a moment and then said: "To tell the truth, her majesty ordered me to follow his majesty's orders just before. I wonder if I'm no longer a member of the Valkyries. We're her majesty's children and warriors, yet her majesty is having me take orders from somebody else. Did I do something wrong?"

Alice stopped to think. She lowered her eyes and softly said: "I can't make any guarantees there, Nier. Her majesty has never given anyone else the rights to command the Valkyries... You're aware of the fact that we grew up alongside her majesty since we were young. Her majesty has bestowed us with parental warmth, and we wield our swords for her. We're her majesty's sword and shield. We only take orders from her majesty. I've never heard of her majesty have a Valkyrie obey the orders of another."

"I'm worried too."

"Can't you just ask her majesty directly then?"

Alice looked at the door before her and Nier who was slightly down and said: "I believe her majesty will provide you with a fair answer."

"I want to, but given her majesty's current condition..."

"What's wrong?"

“You’ll find out when you go inside.”

Nier pushed the door open. Alice is the captain of the Valkyries but she isn’t responsible for protecting the empress. She’s responsible for assassinating and assaulting warriors. She’s rarely seen her majesty ever since she took the mantle of the first generation Valkyrie captain. To Alice, her majesty is forever that majestic existence which rode on her black steed, with a long sword in hand, and her cloak soaked in so much blood that it couldn’t be blown by the winds.

“No... I Don’t... Want to be hated by my son... No... No... I don’t want to be hated by my son... I don’t want to... Why am I like this...? I’m such a failure... I’m such a failure... I’m not worthy of being a mother... I upset my son again... I upset him again... I want to be a good mother... Why...?”

Who are you?!

Who’s the person lying on the bed, hugging the pillow and shivering?!!

Who’s this young girl who’s sulking like she got dumped by her lover?!!

Where’s my empress?! Where’s my majestic empress that fought an enemy army seventeen times and didn’t go down?! Where’s the majestic empress that makes all her retainers prostrate themselves before her?!

Alice’s philosophies, world view and values took a huge hit too! It was such a big hit to her that she felt dizzy and was ready to die. Nier rushed in to support Alice on her feet. She anxiously called: “Captain! Captain! What’s wrong, captain?! Hold yourself together! Captain! Captain!”

“Haha... Nier~, Nier~... Tell me... What’s the point of our existence? Why are we alive? What value does our existence hold in this world?”

The impact was so harsh that she’s questioning the meaning of her own existence?!!

A moment later...

Alice haggardly crawled onto Nier’s thigh. She lifelessly asked Nier: “Nier... When did this start...?”

Nier sat at the front door and replied: “It started after lunch...”

“No... I meant... When did this phenomenon start...?”

“Since his majesty returned... Her majesty has essentially fallen ill like this each time after meeting his majesty... Her majesty is usually in that state for at least three hours...”

Nier went silent for a moment. She then looked at Alice and said: “Captain! It was definitely his majesty that caused her majesty to become like this! Her majesty was fine before his majesty returned! It’s his majesty’s fault!!”

“DAMN STRAIGHT!!”

Alice turned around and sat up. She was feeling weak, but in that moment, her eyes were alight with the flames of vengeance, like a body that passed out and then awoken up after being refuelled. She looked at Nier and shouted: “I was wrong! I got tricked! That prince is evil to the core! He used shady tricks to turn our empress into that state! I take back what I said! That prince is trouble for us Valkyries!! We must eliminate him!!”

Nier excitedly stood up and said: “That’s right!! That’s right! That’s what we have to do! We have to get rid of that plague!”

“Yeah! That’s right! We have to kill...”

“Who did you two say you want to kill?!”

Glossary

*In Chinese, there are numerous ways of referring to yourself as “I”. She uses a version which no retainer, servant or any other class would use with anyone from the royal family.

What my daily schedule looks like (7-days a week):

3:30AM – Wake up

4:00AM – Eat breakfast while proofreading translated chapter

5:00AM – Begin work

7:30AM – Train

10:00AM – Work

12:00PM – Upload chapters to Patreon, then back to work while people are out

having lunch or start translating

3:00PM – Train (If training 2x per day or otherwise work) + Upload chapter somewhere in between when nobody is paying attention

5:00PM – Get home and continue work

8:00PM – Finish work and start translating

10:00/11:00PM – Finish translating and then prepare stuff for tomorrow and deal with house chores

11:30PM/12:00AM – Enter the time machine to wake up in a few hours and do it all over again

And here's a bonus, Troy's moms at the hot spring by the border:



Chapter 08

A chilling light flashed by. Strands of hair from Alice and Nier's heads floated in the air. The slash wasn't seen clearly. Actually, it wasn't seen at all! Human eyes have limits and the slash just now exceeded that limit. The two of them exchanged looks as they watched their hair fall to the ground. They didn't even detect the slash. If the slasher had wanted to take their lives, what would be on the ground right now wouldn't be their hair, but their heads.

"Your majesty!!"

The empress stood before them and sheathed her sword. She then took in a deep breath, looked at the two kneeling in a panic before her and said: "You are not to touch my son! You are not to put his safety at risk. Anything that puts his safety at risk must be kept away! Nier! I believe I already ordered you to obey the prince's orders! Why have you not left yet?!"

She drew her sword!!

The sword that her majesty had not drawn in almost ten years was released for the sake of a man!!

That's her majesty's beloved sword she used when she went to war. The reflection of that sword atop the snowy mountains on the steppe on the woods in the valley that appeared at the forefront of the army never disappeared. All the soldiers placed their beliefs in that sword. No soldier retreated when he saw the radiant light of that sword even when outnumbered or when the odds were against him. Ever since the empire sealed Fang Ma Southern Mountain, the empress's sword had not been unsheathed in over ten years. Everybody thought that the next time it was drawn would be the beginning of another great war. No one expected the sword which determined the fate of the nation to be drawn over a teenager!

Alice lowered her head and shouted: “Your majesty!! Don’t be fooled by a man! This isn’t how you were! Please come to your senses!”

“Am I very strange? Is it strange of me to want to be a good mother?!”

Nier raised her head. She was terrified. She looked at the empress who bit down on her lip hard and eyes were welling up with tears. She’d never seen the empress shed a tear before!

The empress looked at them and choked on her tears as she said: “Can’t I ask for a family? My husband is no longer with me and you want to take my son from me as well? I only have one child. He shares my blood. I gave birth to him and yet I have to let that other woman raise him. I want to keep my child company like a normal mother. I want to hear him call me mom too. Are my desires that strange? I’m willing to give up the throne if he’s willing to stay by my side. I just want to be a qualified mother. Am I strange for desiring that?!”

“That’s...”

Alice and Nier exchanged looks. They had no way of considering that question. The empress shouldn’t be like this from their perspective. To them, she was meant to be a majestic and brave existence like none before. She was supposed to be someone covered in bloodshed. The woman before them that was crying over her son wasn’t behaving the way an empress should.

“Enough! Nier! From now on, you belong to my son! Move into the outer chamber and obey his orders. Go! Alice, take a squad with you and protect him from the shadows. Kill anybody who even attempts to bring him harm.”

“Your majesty!”

“GET OUT!”

The empress violently slammed the door shut. Nier and Alice looked at each other before they stood up. They let out heavy sighs. They both wore very gloomy expressions. The empress had never been like that in front of them. The high and mighty image of the empress in their minds shattered, and became the image of an idiotic mother who’d do anything for her son.

Besides their concern, their other source of anger was jealousy. All the members of the Valkyries were orphans that the empress took in. She

protected them until they came of age. Everything was given to them by her majesty and was the only existences who could bring a smile to her face. For them, she wasn't just an empress but like a mother to them. She was an existence that gave them everything. That's why they're almost like lunatic worshippers. The Valkyries don't have positive opinions about anyone and treat everyone coldly like enemies. They only show their happiness to the empress. They were willing to shed blood if it meant they could put a smile on the empress's face.

But now, the one and only existence the empress cared about and loved was stolen away by some weird man. For his sake, she shed tears, felt sorrow and became so nervous she was nothing like an empress. That's what saddened them most. It probably felt like a sad feeling of having their empress stolen away from them.

"Aren't you Captain Alice and Instructor Nier? Long-time no see."

The two of them turned around to face in the direction of the voice. They bowed and politely said: "Greetings, Mr Castell! The journey must have been tough on you."

Castell smiled and nodded. The two of them raised their heads and wore rarely seen looks of friendliness and respect, and asked: "Are you here to see her majesty, Mr Castell?"

"Yes. I just returned from the elf nation. Is her majesty in?"

"She is. It's just... Her majesty... Is very strange..."

"Oh, his majesty has returned."

Castell laughed casually and then said: "You two should leave. It's normal for her to be like that. She is his majesty's mother after all. Her blood flows within him. He's different to us. We are only her adopted children. Are we in any position to speak out when her biological son is here?"

Their expressions got gloomy but they nodded anyway. They then bowed and left. Castell watched their backs as they left. He then smiled, turned around to face the door, let out a long sigh and softly said: "You're not the only ones who are jealous..."

I silently watched the sunset. So much has happened since I arrived here. It's only been a day, but it feels like it's been a tiring month already for me. I didn't even feel this worn out over the matter with the Earth Dragons back at the elf nation. I feel like all my energy got drained over a lunch.

I turned around and lay on the bed. I suddenly remember that mom asked me to gift the empress something. I was rushed in the afternoon and forgot all about it. I sat up and opened my bag. I took out a glass bottle. Inside was a clear liquid which should be the spring water from the holy spring I suppose. Is the spring water of elves effective for humans? Why did she want me to give this to the empress?

The water in the elf nation put me through hell. Mom had to hug me as she washed me every day when it was time to bath. Resisting those huge jugs pressing on me and her perfect body was torturous. Sometimes Lucia latched her body onto mine to torture me further...

Wait!!!

If I were to wash myself here...

Oh god, help me!!! I'll drown here! I'll drown I tell you!!

Knock. Knock

"Come in."

"Sorry for disturbing you."

The door got pushed open and I saw Nier leisurely enter with a small bag. She then looked at me, bowed and said: "Your majesty. I've been ordered to protect you, so please allow me to stay here. Further, I will be following your orders from now. I will do my best to carry out your orders. So please allow me to settle my luggage."

STOP!!

PLEASE STOP FOR A SECOND!!

"Wait! I'm confused. Could you please explain this to me?!"

"Explain? Didn't you make the request? Her majesty said that you wanted me to come here. Was it all a mistake?! It must be, right?! In that case, I apologise

your majesty. I'll leave right away!"

"You're right. I did ask her for you."

"Tch..."

You just clicked your tongue, didn't you?! You just angrily clicked your tongue, didn't you?! Are you that upset about staying with me?! That hurts, you know?!

"Where are you going to stay then?"

I helplessly sat on my bed and looked at her. She pointed at the book shelf and said: "Behind there is a small room. It was originally intended to be used in cases of emergency, but since you're not using it, I'll stay there for the meantime."

"Oh... Okay."

I watched as Nier settled in with her one little bag. I was a little confused. Does Nier only have that one set of clothes? Or do all the Valkyries wear the same uniform? Or is her clothing in that little bag? Doesn't she have her own belongings?

I don't know...

My Goals for the month: Maintain pace of 4 weekly chapters here, 5 for the higher-tier patrons, crack the 450 rank on novel update, give 100% effort to it ('cause I'm no good with maths, I don't know where 60% or 90% lie, I only know where 0% and 100% are). Other things like increasing number of readers, supporters *etc.* are beyond my control, so there's no point in me fretting over them. Yes, I only get 3.5 – 4.5 hours sleep, but I don't have the luxury of 8 hours of sleep, can't afford it, so I just sleep faster. That's all from me, see you all next week!

Chapter 09

The empress didn't come at dinner time. I was relieved but at the same time felt slightly uncomfortable. Dinner suited my palate more. Perhaps it was because they switched chefs. I had the dining hall to myself at dinner. Nier stood sternly behind me.

I wiped my mouth with a napkin, washed my hands in the jade bowl by the side, turned around to look at Nier who had her hand placed on her sword and called her: "Nier."

"Did the meal not suit your palate?"

"Not at all... It wasn't bad." I shook my head and gripped the bottle in my hand. I was going to give this to the empress tonight, but it looks like I'll have to make a trip to the inner court now. I'll need Nier to take me there since the empress isn't here.

Nier looked at me without any compassion and asked: "What are your orders then?"

I don't know why but I can always detect hatred towards me and a desire to kill me in her eyes... Had she not received orders to protect me, I bet I would've had my throat slit while taking a stroll out at night out of nowhere.

"Umm... Could you take me to see her majesty? I have something I want to give her..."

"What is it?"

Nier's eyes turned cold and the killing intent aura she had intensified. It seemed that she gets angry if I mentioned her majesty in her presence. I handed her the small bottle in my hand and said: "Just this... I believe it's the water from the elves' holy spring.... I don't know what purpose it serves either, it's just what my mother asked me to bring along."

“Alright, please come with me. I’ll take you to the inner court. However, don’t get scared when you set foot into the inner court.”

Nier bowed. Her tone sounded like she was ridiculing me. I stood up and followed Nier out. The inner court must be where her majesty resides. Judging by Nier’s tone, I guess it’s heavily guarded.

The inner court was situated in the innermost part of the palace. It didn’t look eye-catching. It looked like a normal palace. Compared to all the other buildings, the residence of her majesty was much more... Normal. I scanned the place. There were two young girls with swords by the door. They looked identical to Nier. They had the same getup, the same hair and even the exact same gestures.

When they saw Nier, they bowed and greeted her: “Instructor!”

Nier nodded and responded: “Uhm.”

She then walked up to them and looked at me following behind. She then gave a little smile, shuffled her feet on the steps and said: “Your majesty, if you’ve prepared yourself, please come up.”

I nodded and followed Nier up the steps...

“The inner court is the resting place of her majesty and males are forbidden from entering! Take one more step and you will be killed on the spot mercilessly!!”

It didn’t even occur to me!!

I take back what I said about there being two guards. As soon as I set foot onto the step, swords were unsheathed in an instant from every direction. They were unsheathed so quickly I only heard the clanging of steel. I stood there in a daze in the same posture as when I placed my foot down onto the step. About ten swords were aimed at my neck like a necklace.

I felt the cold steel on my neck. My neck will get penetrated if I even do so much as budge, huh?

I was surrounded by the cold reflection of the blades. My brain was completely blank as I looked at a girl before me whose eyes were filled with

killing intent. Had I taken another step my body would be in pieces right now.

“Your majesty, these are the Valkyries. The moment you stepped onto the steps, twelve swords were already aimed at your neck. You probably never imagined you could have so many swords against your neck, right?”

Nier stood in front of me and smiled proudly with her arms folded. She clapped her hands and the swords were removed from my neck right away. A shadow moved and I was on my butt. I grabbed my neck and caught my breath as I scanned my surroundings out of shock. There was nothing around other than the two guards by the door. That moment was just like a dream.

“Please wait a moment, I shall go report to her majesty.”

.....

I sat and looked at Nier completely shocked. She looked at me with eyes filled with disdain. She turned around in a chic way. I felt like her black ponytail whipped my heart. The Valkyries are a scary group of women! They should be called crazy, not loyal! With a group of guards like that here, this place must practically be an impregnable castle.

I quivered as I got up. My two legs were like jelly and I struggled to stand on my own legs. How embarrassing... I have nothing but the utmost respect for anyone who can maintain their calm when they’ve got twelve swords pressed against their throat.

Nier quickly returned and said: “Her majesty calls for you. Please enter.”

She then led me inside. The interior of the inner court was decorated much more extravagantly than its exterior. The floor we walked on reflected our reflection like a mirror. The swaying candles illuminated the magnificent walls of the inner court. It was as though everything was made of gold. There seemed to be a faint fruit fragrance inside.

Nier led me to a large white folding door and said: “Her majesty awaits you inside.”

“Oh... Alright...”

“So before you try and do something to her majesty, please remember our

existence. After all, we're capable of cutting you up into twelve parts in the time it takes for you to take a single step. I hope you and her majesty enjoy your conversation."

Nier's expression was really scary. You might say it was a polite smile but in my eyes, it was like the fierce gaze of a demon from hell. Nier pulled the door open. I took in a deep breath and entered.

Her majesty's room was basically structured the same as mine, except more extravagant. The air was also filled with a richer fruit scent. I looked around and spotted the empress sitting at a table. Her long black hair was down while she was scribbling on documents in front of her while still in her military get-up.

That's fair game. A ruler has a ruler's work after all.

Without raising her head and while her hands continued to move on the documents, she faintly asked: "You're here very late my son, is something the matter?"

"It's about what happened in the afternoon... Your majesty, please forgive..."

"What happened in the afternoon?"

"What I said was too childish and angered your majesty..."

"Oh, that. I... I... I..."

I noticed that her hand holding her pen was shaking slightly.

"Don't worry, I'm not angry."

A second later, she took in a deep breath, raised her head and looked at me. Her black eyes were filled with hope as she asked: "Is there anything else you'd like to ask of me?"

"My mother asked me to give you something..."

I handed over the bottle with two hands. Her face turned pale for a moment. She took the bottle, looked at it and then said: "I'm grateful for the gesture. Is there anything else my son? Don't be nervous, have some fruit."

Her majesty ripped off a small string of grapes and handed them to me. I quietly ate one by one. She placed her face in her hands and I think she was

smiling as she watched me. She rubbed her temples and asked: “Did you manage to adapt to life with the elves over there, son?”

“I adapted just fine, thank you for your concern, your majesty.”

“Did the elf ruler treat you well?”

“Mom... I mean, my mother treated me very well.”

Crack

I fearfully raised my head and saw the quill pen in her hand snapped in two... She looked around and then returned her gaze to me. She threw away the now snapped pen, took in a deep breath and said: “There’s... There’s... There’s nobody... Else in my room... So... So... Could you... Umm... Uhh... Call... Call... Me...”

I quickly placed the grape skins and seeds on the table, stood up and apologised: “Your majesty! I know! Your majesty! I won’t misaddress you!”*

“No... I... Haa... Forget it...”

The empress sat back into her chair like a balloon that had its air drained and rested her face on her hand. The atmosphere turned awkwardly silent once again. I looked at her majesty. To be honest, the most important thing I wanted to ask when I came here was...

“Umm... Your majesty...”

Her majesty shouldn’t be an evil person... She shouldn’t be...

She clutched her face and replied as though she was crying: “Speak.”

“Umm... Could I please ask you... to bath with me?”

Glossary

*Because there’s a chance I’ll be asked, I’ll explain. He thought she meant to refer to her as “her majesty” as opposed to “mom”.

I came across another translation for something else that used ‘Inner Palace’ instead of ‘Inner Chamber’ which is the literal translation. I skipped that because it made no sense and would be geographically tough to visualise when you’ve got a palace, and then an Inner Palace. Therefore, up to now I’ve gone

with Inner Chamber since it was more of a dwelling than an actual Palace, because we associate palace with a main building structure comprised of small units. They don't have a kitchen built into their dwelling for example. Anyway, I did some research and have found that the term used officially for it is "Inner Court" or "Outer Court". As such, I'll be using "Court" from now on.

Translator Comments: I haven't composed any pieces for the recent chapters because the tone in the chapters aren't as consistent as volume 1. It's possible to compose a melancholic tone and then switch to happy or jumpy in the same piece, but since your reading speed differs, it'd be extremely awkward to have a melancholic melody when the empress is going dere-dere if you know what I mean.

Chapter 10

Translator Comments: First things first. I'll be moving the "start of the week" chapter, for lack of better word, to my Monday instead of Sunday. Reason being, it seems to be that less of you read the released chapter on my Sunday. I don't want anybody to miss out, hence the change. Anyway, this is the long-awaited chapter. I know you've all been waiting for this chapter, for reasons that we all know. Nier also shows her greatness in her dialogue this chapter. Enjoy best girl, and and enjoy the chapter!

"Nier..."

"Just take as me begging you. Please kill yourself, alright?"

"What the hell?!!"

Nier stood before me with her hands clasped in front of her and begged me. What sort of request are you asking of me?! I'm your prince at the end of the day, and this is how you treat me?! Is it so strange for me to ask to take a bath with my own mother?! I'm no pervert either. I wouldn't have made this request if I could wash without drowning!

Moreover, when I made this request, the empress got so elated she flipped her table over... She jumped up and starting undressing. I couldn't have stopped her even if I wanted to... If Nier didn't hear the awkward sounds and barge in I would've seen her everything from head to toe by now... That said, Nier almost pulled her sword out on me when she came in...

I was now standing with Nier at the bathroom's change rooms, where Nier made that request very formally.

"Just what are you thinking? I reminded you that you needed to think carefully before doing anything to her majesty. The Valkyries devote their

loyalty to her majesty, not you. You're angering us by doing this." She pressed her hand against her sword, sighed and said: "I didn't think I'd get mad, but your majesty, you keep on giving me surprises."

"What are you guys mad about when I'm spending time together with my own mother?!"

I can't comprehend this!!

"Son!! Son!! Hurry up and come in!! The water temperature is perfect!"

I heard the empress's excited calls. I looked at Nier and stiffly said: "Could I bother you to turn around? I can't undress with you looking..."

"Of course not. I must make sure that you're not taking any weapons inside. Being naked is nothing to be ashamed of. Or are you implying that your body is so filthy you can't show others?"

Nier glared at me. I felt like my most important sense of pride was being looked at with disgust... She was basically implying my body wasn't attractive. Logically speaking, exposing a man's body to a woman isn't embarrassing in itself entirely, but having it ridiculed by her is the cruellest thing in the world!

"Our philosophies, world view and values have huge discrepancies!"

"If you feel too nervous about undressing by yourself, I'll undress too."

"DON'T!! I'll undress!"

My face and ears were completely red as I stripped off my last piece of clothing. Nier's expression, however, didn't change at all. She didn't even shift her gaze. She didn't seem to be the least bit interested in my body. She just kept her eyes expressionlessly on my face from the moment I started undressing until I was done. She didn't show any dirty or ridiculing thoughts at all.

"Your body is so thin. I guess you're the type who eats and lazes around, huh? Or is it because you didn't inherit enough elf genetics, hmm?"

"Please show some respect for the elves, alright?!"

Nier didn't respond. Instead she opened the bathroom... Ah... Is this really the bathroom? Are you sure we're not at the wrong place? Are you sure this isn't

an aquatics centre? A hot wave came over carrying water vapour along. The glittering tiles were neatly arranged, the walls were made of marble and in the middle was a huge water fountain. On the walls were exquisite wall-paintings and marble statues. The size of the bath was more like a pool than a bath. As soon as I entered, two maids walked up to me... I wasn't sure where to aim my gaze...

I climbed onto the bed to one side. The maid behind me carefully spread some oil on me. I silently tried to recall my calculus and lessons in class to stop my body's natural physiological reaction... This is the empress's inner court, so even her maids were first-class beauties. I usually get red in the face just shaking hands, so with two beautiful girls touching me like this, of course my body would react...

"Don't worry about all those procedures!! Hurry up and let my son into the water!!"

Her majesty's stern voice echoed throughout the heat filled bathroom. The two maids let go once they heard her, stood to one side and said: "Your majesty, please enter the bath."

I took in a deep breath. Am I entering a bath or hell here...? I have to enter the water by the empress's side or else I'll just sink to the bottom. I walked to the edge of the bath. The baths here were divided into three types that were distinguishable just by looking. They were the ice bath, the warm bath and the cold bath. Her majesty was in the hot bath right now. The tray beside her had wine and fruit.

"Hurry up and get in the water, son."

I could see the empress's beautiful body through the water. Her curves weren't as prominent as the elves. Her body was more slender. But those jugs have got to be a rare commodity even amongst humans, right?! In the eyes of humanity, other than the few scars on her waist and lower abdomen, the empress's body must be perfect.

I can't! I can't go into the water!! I need someone to carry me in!

"Your majesty... Umm... Uhh... Could I please ask you to... Carry me into the water..."

“HUH?!”

Her voice echoed through the room, scaring me to the point where I almost knelt down. The empress swam over with eyes filled with joy. Are you that moved?! She was so excited her whole body quivered. Her smile was brighter than anything. She took in a deep breath and opened her arms. Her voice was trembling so much it barely resembled human speech: “Come... Come, my son... Sure... No worries... Mom... Mom will hold you... Sniff!”

Are you so moved that you’re crying?!

I looked at the empress who opened her door which reminded me of the poetic saying “hot springs and lotions”... Haa~ Chinese culture really is unfathomably deep. It only took them four words to describe the eloquence of a beauty in a bath...

I gently reached my hand out. It was the first time I touched the empress’s body. She grabbed my arms with her trembling arms. She was so pleasantly surprised she roared and then pulled me into the water...

That’s right, she didn’t help me slowly into the water, but pulled me right in while she remained in the water... Just visualise the sight of a tiger ripping the head of its prey off its shoulders...

“Son! Son! My son! My Son! Ahh! I’m bathing with my son! I’m so happy, so, so happy! I’ve never experienced such a blissful moment before... Son... Son...”

The empress pulled me right into her embrace. My face was pressed in between her valleys. I just got my head out of the water and before I could catch some air, I was faced with another crisis threatening to deprive me of oxygen. The empress’s embrace was totally different to mom’s embrace. Mom hugged me very gently, while the empress put a lot of strength into her hug. I felt like my spine was getting crushed by her arms...

A unique scent hit me. I could feel the empress’s warm body against mine. She couldn’t want for anything more than to glue herself to me. She rubbed her smooth skin against me vigorously. I felt like I was going to give in and fall, if you know what I mean...

I don’t argue that a boob-face-wash is heavenly, but not being able to breathe

and the pain of having my joints grinding like this made me prefer death...

She vigorously rubbed her face against my forehead. She was so excited she grit her teeth, and was only left with her impulse to embrace me...

I struggled with all my might, splashing water and trying to push her away. It was only then that she noticed my discomfort and loosened her grip. She looked at me with her gentle smile as I looked at her. Just as I was about to speak I noticed something deadly.

I could move in the water.

I didn't seem to be affected in any way.

It was the same feeling I had when I took baths before I died... The feeling of skin contact with the water, the warm temperature of the water and the feeling of water washing over my body felt the exact same. My body didn't have any abnormalities. It was normal like when I took baths at home when I was still alive.

"Son... My Son... Do you need anything else? Be more affectionate with me... I knew you love mommy. I knew you were playing hard-to-get... Mommy will help you wash. Come here... Let mom hold you tight... Come... Come... Call me mom... Call me mom... Come on, my son... come on..."

Who are you, you crazy lady?!

I fearfully looked at the empress who was drooling like a lost zombie approach me. I gave it my all to back away and shouted: "It's fine, your majesty! It's fine! I'll go to the furthest spot! I won't disturb your bath! Please let go of me! Let go of me! Save me!!!"

That day, I went through a new life experience.

That was, her majesty was forever a soldier. I was a soldier, but I only went through the training. My strength... Couldn't compare to her majesty's...

Chapter 10 (Uncensored)

“Nier...”

“Just take it as me begging you. Please kill yourself, alright?”

“What the hell?!!”

Nier stood before me with her hands clasped in front of her and begged me. What sort of request are you asking of me?! I’m your prince at the end of the day, and this is how you treat me?! Is it so strange for me to ask to take a bath with my own mother?! I’m no pervert either. I wouldn’t have made this request if I could wash without drowning!

Moreover, when I made this request, the empress got so elated she flipped her table over.... She jumped up and starting undressing. I couldn’t have stopped her even if I had wanted to.... If Nier didn’t hear the awkward sounds and barge in I would’ve seen her everything from head to toe by now.... That said, Nier almost pulled her sword out on me when she came in....

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“What are you guys mad about when I’m spending time together with my own mother?!”

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“Son!! Son!! Hurry up and come in!! The water temperature is perfect!”

I heard the empress’s excited calls. I looked at Nier and stiffly said: “Could I

bother you to turn around? I can't undress with you looking..."

"Of course not. I must ensure that you're not taking any weapons inside. Being naked is nothing to be ashamed of. Or are you implying that your body is so filthy you can't show others?"

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"Please show some respect for elves, alright?!"

Nier didn't respond. Instead she opened the bathroom.... Ah... Is this really the bathroom? Are you sure we're not at the wrong place? Are you sure this isn't an aquatics centre? A hot wave came over carrying water vapour along. The glittering tiles were neatly arranged, the walls were made of marble and in the middle was a huge water fountain. On the walls were exquisite wall-paintings and marble statues. The size of the bath was more like a pool than a bath. As soon as I entered, two maids walked up to me.... I wasn't sure where to aim my gaze...

I climbed onto the bed to one side. The maid behind me carefully spread some oil on me. I silently tried to recall my calculus knowledge and lessons in class to stop my body's natural physiological reaction... This is the empress's

inner court, so even her maids were first-class beauties. I usually get red in the face just shaking hands, so with two beautiful girls touching me like this, of course my body would react.... And what made things worse was...

They didn't spare my private spot!

"Don't worry about all those procedures!! Hurry up and let my son into the water!!"

Her majesty's stern voice echoed throughout the heat filled bathroom. The two maids let go once they heard her, stood to one side and said: "Your majesty, please enter the bath."

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"Son... My Son... Do you need anything else? Be more affectionate with me.... I knew you loved mommy. I knew you were playing hard-to-get.... Mommy will help you wash. Come here... Let mommy hold you tight... Come... Come... Call me mom... Call me mom... Come on, my son... come on..."

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That day, I went through a new life experience.

That was, her majesty was forever a solider. I was a soldier, but I only went through the training.

My strength... Couldn't compare to her majesty's....

Chapter 11

The empress sat in her armchair, put one leg over the other, rested her face in her right hand and stared at her reflection in the mirror.

She thought that she could improve her relationship with her son during their bath, but in the end she ended up scaring him because she was too hasty. It felt like their relationship got worse instead of improving.

However...

She managed to successfully hug her son even though he wasn't too willing... Things couldn't continue the way they were. She had to get him to accept her as his mother. He always called the other woman "mom", but her "your majesty". She was his biological mother so why wasn't she able to receive her child's love?

She could have everything she asked for but she couldn't get her child to call her "mom". She could still remember the pain and bliss of giving birth to him. She could still remember his tiny figure after she gave birth to him. She was enveloped in bliss as she watched him take his silent breaths. She could watch her child for all of eternity.

However, up until now she's spent her days on horseback. She led the army herself to conquer the lands. She's an empress that fulfilled all her roles and worthy of respect. From the perspective of her soldiers, she's a brave and peerless commander. From the perspective of her enemies, she's their nightmare on the battlefield. But nobody but her own tears that flow from her eyes every night and herself know that she's also a mother.

She felt that she owed him far too much and reasoned that was why it was only normal for him to be so vigilant of her. She gave birth to him but didn't accompany him. But it's not like she didn't want to stay by his side. If she could

choose her fate, she'd be willing to abandon the empire and her throne. She wanted to see her child slowly grow up even if that meant she'd become a mere commoner as that was enough for her.

She owns a vast territorial area yet can't get her own son to call her "mom".

A maid held the empress's hair and carefully and meticulously combed it. Her majesty has never once dedicated any effort into looking after her hair, but her long black hair was perfect. The maid carefully combed her majesty's hair as she was afraid of hurting her. That said, her majesty was no stuck up woman, so she wouldn't throw a fit over a broken strand of hair.

The comb got stuck because of the maid's trembling hand. The empress vigorously swayed and two strands of her hair broke....

"I apologise, your majesty!!"

The maid immediately knelt down. The empress lowered her head to look at her and then violently swung a kick at her.

A clear crack sound was made. The maid flew out like a piece of cotton, and crashed heavily into the wall. Ah, wait. Allow me to correct myself there. What flew out wasn't her body, but her corpse.

The empress stood up, flicked her hair, picked up a long whip that was barbed on one side and walked out.

The inner court rules forbade males from entering but it was extremely difficult for females to enter too. The inner court was her majesty's residence. Normal people weren't allowed to look at her appearance let alone her dwelling. As a consequence, not many people were aware that she had her unique hobby set up underground. That place is her dungeon.

"Your majesty!"

Two young girls walked over and saluted her when they saw her.

The dungeon was wet, dark and cold. The candle lights swaying on the wall made the lighting inside unsteady. The rust and rancid smell was inerasable. The empress slowly crossed over the wet floor and moss on the ground. She looked at the man kneeling inside of the rusty iron railing cell. He had a foul

stench on him, probably because he wet himself.

“Your majesty! Your majesty! Please spare me! Please spare me! I... I was unaware that his majesty did not like meat stews! I... I have served you for many years... Please spare me... Please spare me!!”

The man crawled on the ground like a bug over to her. One of the young girls extended her foot out, stepped on his head and exclaimed: “Who let you approach her majesty?!”

“Busybody...”

The empress pushed the young girl away, pulled out her long whip and whipped the man squirming on the ground. The whip ripped through the air and made a terrifying sound upon impact. The sharp spikes on the whip were like a hound biting into his flesh. The air was quickly filled with the stench of blood. The two young girls jerked like the effects of doping kicked in, like a wolf that found its prey on a snowy day.

“AAAARRRGGH!!”

His screams of excruciating pain reverberated in the dungeon, frightening a group of rats who fled their corner.

The empress snapped her whip back, looked at him and said: “The meat stew you made, made my son suffer a lot.”

“I... I... I did not do that intentionally... I did not...”

“My son suffered after he ate your meat stew.”

The whip made contact again, and another piece of flesh levitated into the air.

The empress looked at him without any pity. She raised her whip up high again, took in a deep breath, grunted, ripped it through the air and created an explosive resonating sound in the tiny dungeon again...

“I want my son to call me mom!!”

“I want to act coquettish with my son while I embrace him!”

“I want to be a qualified mother. I want to see my son mature!!”

“I just want to be a mother! A Mother!!!”

The two girls got excited watching her peel his flesh off his bones and splatter his blood with her whip, and cried: “Long live, your majesty!!”

Their eyes were filled with the flames of insanity. That was their empress. That’s the attitude an empress should have. Slaying, conquering, and overruling everything, killing all those who dare question her. That was the empress. That was the empress’s true nature. That was the empress they adored!

The Valkyries are loyal to an empress, not a mother!

The man’s shrill screams came to a sudden halt and all that was left was a pile of flesh and blood. There were white bones in sight too. His flesh could now be found at every corner of the dungeon. The air was filled with the stench of blood. The empress licked every drop of blood off of her finger. Her red lips looked even more seductive. She threw the whip, turned around and left.

She was done letting off steam.

She returned to her usual self where she was a loving mother...

Everybody but her was a threat to her son.

She’s his rightful mother. He grew up inside her. He’s her son to which she gave birth to. There’s no mistake about it.

That bitch...

The empress threw herself onto her bed and cussed the ruler of that other world again...

I opened my eyes to see a pair of green eyes looking at me...

“Nier, I beg you. Please don’t look at me like that...”

“Your majesty, I beg you. Please kill yourself...”

That’s the second time you’ve made that unreasonable request of me today!!! Do you have a grudge against me?!

Translator Comments: The topic of getting an Anime adaptation of Son-con was brought up in the comments yesterday, and Kickstarter was brought up

when I mentioned I was legit serious on trying to make it happen if I could grow on Patreon. While kickstarter is one channel to go by, from a realistic standpoint, Nekopara required 100k just to get a 20 minute OVA. The interest level has to be absolutely huge, and with our current readers, there aren't even 10k readers – it's not Malty Melromarc greatness level yet – and only a fraction of the readers are interested enough to support it on a financial level. Based on that reasoning, Kickstarter is a no-go at the moment. The same goes for Patreon. If I can't even get my own life sorted, there's no way I can try recruiting a team, composing the score, translating and managing the whole thing. They call me Foreman because I do the work of four-men, not 10 men unfortunately. I'm certainly not ruling out the possibility of it making it become a reality, but at the moment, we're light years away. I hate hoping (because it's not a strategy of any shape or form), but I hope you continue to support the series and myself. You'll see me struggle, but you'll never see me quit. I don't know when, but we'll make something nobody before could do, happen, because I'll keep putting one foot in front of the other until you I drop. In other news, I'll drop some cool stuff with tomorrow's chapter, so like the Facebook page, turn on your notifications, add it to your reading list on Novel Updates if you haven't already, and bookmark the site. If you don't know how to do that, you don't deserve the entertainment.

Chapter 12

“Her majesty didn’t come to the conference today.”

“I heard it had to do with his majesty’s return.”

“Yeah, the only thing or person in the entire empire who could stop her majesty from coming to a conference would be his majesty.”

The throne which her majesty always sat on in the conference chamber was empty today. The retainers below whispered amongst each other. Those who were ordered to “off themselves” last time now had swollen red faces. They sneaked glances at each other to see others have more swollen faces than themselves. The reason the relationship between the two factions have become more harmonious today is probably because the representatives of both factions this time are elders.

They respected each other and weren’t impulsive like the young n’s who were still wet behind their ears.

Castell walked up to the middle of the two rows of tables, clapped his hands and said with a smile: “Alright, everybody. Her majesty is not feeling well today, so you may all leave early today.”

“My, my, long no see, Castell.”

One of the old fat men from the formal clothing faction looked at Castell, pointed at him with his fingers which resembled lotus roots, laughed out loud and said: “You sneaky bastard, where’d you run off to? Did you go off to make some big bucks?”

Castell replied with a smile: “You sure know how to tell jokes. I only made a trip to the elf nation as an envoy.”

“Aren’t you modest? Hahahaha. Castell, Castell. You’re our envy. You’re the only retainer who can freely enter the inner courts.”

He put his back into patting Castell on the shoulder as he said: “What I mean is, we’re just mere retainers. We aren’t favoured by her majesty like you Castell.”

Castell turned around as he looked at his dignified rectangular face, chuckled and said: “You’re exaggerating General Carter. I’m not favoured by her majesty. I just happened to start serving her earlier. Furthermore, I am not the only one permitted entry into the inner court. I have to report in before entering. His majesty is the one who can freely enter and leave the inner court.”

“Oh yeah, his majesty has returned. I haven’t gone and paid his majesty a visit yet.”

The fat blob walked over to Castell’s side, tapped Castell on his chest with his hands which had gems on every finger, and said: “Let’s get together one day and invite his majesty to an evening party. Our dear prince has returned and we didn’t even pay him a visit last night. Shame on us.”

“Yeah, we should hold an evening party.” General Carter nodded and continued: “Castell, is his majesty free right now? We didn’t pay him a visit yesterday so we need to go and apologise today.”

Castell pursed his lips into a smile. These people who are always up to no good really don’t learn. Since they’re aware that they can’t win favour with her majesty, they’re trying to win his majesty’s favour instead. They’ve also come to the realisation that whichever faction wins his majesty’s favour will consequently win favour with her majesty. It’s just as they say, whether it’s a prince, a wealthy and powerful retainer, or a general, none can compare to her majesty’s favour. The moment they’re bestowed with her majesty’s favour, will be the moment they control half of the empire.

“Sorry, but I don’t know where his majesty has gone... His majesty is a free and easy-going spirit, so I presume he’s left to palace to go play somewhere.”

The fatso thumped his chest and proudly said: “My, that’s not good. I’m acquainted with all the shops. His majesty should’ve mentioned it if he was going to go out. I can guarantee that it wouldn’t cost him a penny to entertain himself and eat out on the streets.”

“Hmm... Perhaps we should organise a parade for his majesty. I’ll go arrange it

now.”

Castell stopped them and said: “Don’t be hasty. His majesty must be tired from his trip and has yet to rest up. Instead of tiring him further, how about letting his majesty play freely for a few days? You can go pay his majesty a visit afterwards.”

“You’re right, you’re right.”

“Let’s do that then.”

I don’t know anything about what Castell said, but he was right about two things. One, I’ve indeed left the palace. Two, I really am exhausted.

If someone were to sit beside you and watch you sleep while cleaning their sword with a piece of cloth, I don’t think you’d be able to sleep either. That’s right, Nier sat on the chair next to my bed last night and stared at me the whole night while cleaning her sword with a piece of cloth. I couldn’t even fall asleep.

Or rather, I didn’t dare to fall asleep...

I have a very important task to complete today. I need to get an armour made using these materials mom gave so I need to find an experienced blacksmith. The skills of blacksmiths in the elf nation allow them to create simple pieces of armour, but they’re not the best choice when it comes to crafting high-grade armour. While it’s true that magic has been cast on the Earth Dragon armour, it still requires the handiwork of humans to create light armour which allows ease of movement and isn’t easy to spot.

But... I really don’t want to bring Nier along...

Nier however wouldn’t back off half-an-inch. She followed me without wearing any expression and I couldn’t shake her off either. The palace guards in the elf nation were a headache, but I couldn’t even eat breakfast with this cold female bodyguard with her hand placed on her sword following me around! Nier’s “just ignore me” aura scared the boss of the meat bun stand shitless.

Lucia doesn’t reveal her weapon and usually dresses like a young girl, but not Nier! Wherever Nier goes, the atmosphere around her becomes imposing. Is it too much to ask to let me take a stroll on the streets?!

“Umm, Nier, could you possibly head back first? I really don’t need any protection.”

“Please don’t misunderstand. I couldn’t be more eager to drag your corpse through the streets. However, I’d fail her majesty if I did that. Just pretend that I’m not here, you can just ignore me.”

Aren’t you cursing me?! You really want me dead, don’t you?! Speaking politely like that doesn’t change the evil fact that you me dead!

“Nier, I think we need to have a chat as to why you want me to die so badly...”

Nier tilted her head, looked at me confused and asked: “Don’t you think that you’re an unnecessary existence, your majesty? Don’t you at least have that teeny amount of self-awareness?”

“.....”

The earnest tone you said that with really hurt me...

I definitely need to shake her off...

I scanned the streets. Humanity’s city streets are wider than the elf nation’s, but the streets weren’t spacious. The scent in the air was stronger. The scent of different foods and fragrances were mixed together. Carriages went up and down the streets non-stop. It was the same scene that I witnessed upon my arrival. This place was bustling like a modern day metropolis.

I squeezed in and out of the crowds. This is what I learnt from the Celestial Empire*. It’s a skill you need to navigate food courts, public transport stops and tourist attractions. I could find a spot for myself regardless of how crowded it was. What do you think, Nier? You can’t keep up with me when you’ve never experienced travelling during Chinese New Year, can you? How are you going to catch me?

“Your majesty, you’re headed towards the flower district.”

Far out!

Nier followed closely behind. I never lost her!!

“Flower district?”

I slowly noticed the change in the environment. There were yellow flags hung atop the buildings on both sides. An arched gate separated this area from the rest of the world. There were women dressed in short yellow skirts revealing their arms and legs on one side. The majority of them were chattering in groups. On the other side were women in long skirts made from silk or otherwise expensive silk. They clung to the arms of men, walking with them along the street happily.

This must be the red-light district.

I turned around and saw Nier looking in that direction with an extremely disgusted look on her face. It seemed that she hated the area. I looked inside and found that it was a subdivision of the city. However, the alleys between the buildings were narrow. They're perfect for setting sexual traps even gods couldn't escape. You know the type where the girl seduces the guy into going into an alley with her, and the moment the guy pulls his pants down, there'll be a few hunks that come in claiming to be her brother, boyfriend or whatever, and then either threaten to sue you for sexual harassment and extort money from you, or outright beat you up and run off with your wallet? I imagine I could jump from the second floor since it doesn't look that high anyway.

Alright, I'll shake Nier off here!

I don't believe a girl would take the initiative to come here. Additionally, she'd have to share the space with men. Nier will definitely wait at the door. I'll escape through the window, jump down into an alley and get away! Perfect!

"Oh, right. I was planning to come here. I know it's daytime, but I'm craving it this morning. Nier, do you want to come in with me?"

I pointed to this so called flower districts huge yellow flag and smiled naughtily.

Nier looked at me even more disgusted...

Glossary

*Celestial Empire = A name used to refer to China. It was a translation of Tianchao (天朝), a name for China.

Flower District is the old phrase for red-light district.

Translator Comments: Regarding the suggestion about moving it to a bigger site, it has its merits but also its drawbacks. And putting aside my asshole nature and desire to top them, we were discussing the finance growth side of things. To address that and play devil's advocate, it's a feasible method, but at the same time fruitless. To elaborate, a growth in readers increases the probability of more monetary support, but at the same time, that probability is minute. The reason is, it's very, very rare that someone can't afford something in life – putting third world countries and bankruptcy aside. It's about "value". The question is "Is this/that/he/she worth x amount of dollars/x amount of time." And you'd be hard pressed to persuade me that you couldn't afford \$1 a month. If you actually can't afford \$1/month, you'd be off someone trying to make a fraction of that to survive, not here. If you actually can't, I suggest you stop reading and go sort your life out by the way. What they're really saying is "This isn't worth \$1/month". And that's fine, I'm not going to call you a jerk, stingy or whatnot. I'll just grind, try to push further and find ways to make it worth \$x/month. As of current, we have nearly 4k readers here for Son-con, and more reading on aggregate sites (which I'll soon deal with), so 5k+, and 51 believe it to be worth their monetary support. Jacking it up to 10k and extrapolating therefore, most likely won't make much more than a minute difference. And as for the big-wigs, I'll find a way to over-take them, I'm good at that.

That's that, and now here's my promised bonus, enjoy:
<https://www.facebook.com/lordwujizun/videos/260850121066846/>

Chapter 13

“Aren’t you the energetic one, sir? You’re already here so early in the morning?”

I sweat that this is my first time going to a place of this sort. As soon as I entered, all my senses were overwhelmed by the scent of cheap perfumes and the smiles of women. The majority of them appeared only wearing short skirts. They smiled mockingly as they looked over my way. One of them was smoking a pipe, while the others who were covered in heavy make-up looked at me with enchanting smiles and said.

“Hmm...”

“I haven’t seen you before. You’re not an old customer, so did you just arrive in the city? You’ve come to the right place. Of all the places in the imperial city, we’re the best at helping men relax and have fun. Many travellers lost track of when they had to leave when they came here...”

I smiled bitterly. Are you sure that you didn’t off them when they didn’t have money to pay you? I feel like the probability that is highly probable... But from a logical standpoint, the chances of such cases occurring in the imperial city shouldn’t be too high, I don’t think...

“Hey, uhh... I’d like to ask where blacksmiths are commonly found in the imperial city.”

I really didn’t want sink into depravity here, probably because all the women around me were all national-level beauties like mom, the empress, Nier, and Lucia. I’m currently not interested in common women. However, I still need to gather the information I need... Nier didn’t enter with me just as I predicted. Once I get to the second floor, I’ll find a window to jump out of and all will be well.

“Blacksmiths? Blacksmiths are gathered three neighbourhoods away from

here. You'll find a city wall inside the city there. I wouldn't go out of my way to go there, it stinks like rotten eggs." She frowned as she fanned her nose vigorously as though she was there smelling the stench.

I smiled bitterly to go along with her. The rotten egg smell she mentioned must be sulphur. But is it alright to have blacksmiths within the city? Isn't it better to have production engineering equipment placed on the city outskirts...? The blacksmiths and artisans here must commonly use sulphur, right...?

Wait! Sulphur?!

That must mean that humanity's technology has already reached the point where they're using cannons then!

Ah, right... I heard humanity already had guns when I was with the elves. But I thought they were arquebus so I didn't pay too much attention. I never expected them to have cannons already. For all I know, the standards of their cannons may already be at the 18th century's level. That also means that humanity here has already started using flintlock guns.

Elves with magic wouldn't be able to keep up with the attack pace of humanity then. A human with a gun is a completely different being to a human without a gun.

"Are you here to ask for directions, sir? How about relaxing now that you've got your answer? As our ancestors use to say, 'a man must relax his mind in order to work', right? This is also the first time I've seen a man bring a girl along with him here... Or is that your wife looking for you?"

I turned around and was shocked to find Nier standing behind me. She closed her eyes and placed her right hand on her sword handle. All the women around me backed off in an instant. Nier's aura was implying "come close and I'll kill you," which was extremely frightening. She placed her hand on her sword handle while standing behind me in silent.

"Nier... Why did you come in...?"

This is no place for a girl to be!! What sort of psychological obstacles did you have to overcome to enter?! Why did you come in?!

“Don’t worry. You can do whatever you please. Just pretend I’m not present.”

Nier pulled out a piece of cloth that’d be used to cover her eyes, then flicked her ponytail and said: “I can locate enemies just through my hearing so you don’t have to worry. Please follow your degenerated soul and go ahead with your degenerative-depraved personal activities. This place is perfect for you if you think about it. How about you move into here?”

“...I have nothing left to say about your animosity towards me...”

How can I pretend you don’t exist?! Are you just going to watch me do what I want to do if I decided to?!

And you’ve deeply hurt me with your words once again!

“The young lady is truly an interesting one. She looks so adorable when she’s jealous.”

“You’re thinking too much. I’m not jealous. To me, he’s just a target that I hate to the very core and couldn’t be more eager to kill.”

“Just kill me and be done with it...”

“I can’t, and that’s why I asked you to kill yourself.”

She drew her sword, went down on one knee and handed her sword to me with two hands... I felt my mouth twitch. It’s my mistake. I can accept living with anyone but Nier. She’s not joking. She really does hate me to my core! What did I do to you?! Or did the original prince do something to you?! What happened to us not sharing any relationship?! Why do you hate me like I prostituted you or abandoned you?!

Actually, it’s worse than that!

“Please choose a girl for me!”

I grit my teeth. If that’s how you want to play, I’ll go along with you! The second floor should be where the rooms are. I dare you to follow me into the room!

“Sure! Who do you like?”

A girl pulled me over, clapped her hands, and the girls who heard it came over

and posed seductively. I swept my eyes across them. I wasn't earnestly choosing. Black hair, black eyes, tall and a generous bosom. Okay, you!

Wait!!

Aren't those basically the empress's features?!

Aaaahhh!!! Is that what I think of the empress?! Why?! Why?! Shouldn't I choose one that resembles Lucia more? Why am I choosing one who's similar to the empress?!

Man, that's too scary!!

"Alright. Get a room on the second floor..."

As soon as the woman finished shouting, the woman I chose rushed over. She smiled seductively and wrapped her arms around mine. I almost gagged because of her poor quality perfume. Seeing her up close, I noticed her face had wrinkles that couldn't be hidden and her skin was turning dark... Sorry auntie, but I really don't feel that way about you. Once we get upstairs, I'll be leaving through the window. I'll pay you, don't worry!

"Miss... You don't need to follow us upstairs now do you...?"

"Move..."

Nier pushed the boss lady aside with one hand. She stomped up to the second floor and followed closely behind me into a small room. She then closed the door and blocked the door.

I was face-to-face with the woman. The woman looked at Nier confused, tugged on my clothes and quietly asked: "What's this about?"

"Oh, don't worry about me. Just ignore me. Do whatever you please."

Nier brought a chair over and sat by the door. She closed her eyes and folded her arms, acting like she didn't exist. I grit my teeth, aggressively yanked the window open, left some gold coins behind and leapt out!!

Toss it! I'll leg it if I have to!!

Translator Comments: Next chapter posted here will drop in 96 hours instead of 72 hours for reason previously explained. About the "read more" button, I'm

testing some things out, so please put up with it until I figure out what I need to which won't be long. Sorry guys. And last thing, whoever you people are creating fraud donations, fuck off! If you're trying to troll, you're just wasting your time filling out the form. The bot systems aren't stupid, they can pick up on it, nimrods. Find something better to do. The level of stupidity exhibited basically indicates that if I were to put your brain in a bird's head, it would fly upside down. Leave it alone if you don't want to use it.

Chapter 14

I overestimated the height of this place and my jumping ability. My leg hurt like it broke when I landed. I tried to stand up straight but bent over and fell to the ground. A few men dressed haggardly surrounded me as I groaned and held my leg. The leader of the group was as skinny as a monkey. He looked at me and smiled, revealing his yellow teeth. He pulled a dagger out from his waist. He knelt down, pat me on my face with his knife, and said: “My, my. We scored ourselves one early in the morning and he’s even broken his leg. Whatever shall we do? How about you just obediently hand over your wallet? If you refuse, you’ll never stand up again.”

I held my leg, looked at the dagger before my eyes, took a deep breath and exclaimed: “You guys should hurry and run... You may still be able to escape with your lives...”

“Puhahaha”

His stinky breath that escaped his mouth when he laughed nearly made me gag. He gave me a strong kick to my gut. I coughed, groaned and grabbed my belly. It felt like my insides were being jumbled around. He laughed aloud and said: “You’re going to prevent me from escaping in that shape? You’re worried about our lives? How about you worry about yourself first?!”

Tup, tup

A dark shadow from above landed. I heard the fluttering of a white cape and the friction of a sword being drawn from its scabbard. I held in my pain and shouted: “Stop! Nier! Don’t...”

A warm liquid splashed onto my face and my nose was filled with the scent of blood. I opened my eyes and saw the skinny guy acting tough in front of me moments ago slowly drop to the ground. He got stabbed through his chest and fell down right before me. His eyes were filled with fear. His body was still jerking. I watched as his eyes stopped moving before me.

“WHOA!! SOMEONE’S BEEN KILLED!! SOMEONE’S BEEN KILLED!!!”

His comrades standing around scrambled to escape and Nier tightened her boots to give chase. I held the pain in and reached my hand out to grab Nier by her wrist.

“Your majesty!”

“Don’t... Don’t... Don’t... Don’t... Kill!”

Nier looked at me puzzled. A short moment after, she sighed, gave me a nod and proceeded to wipe her sword down with a torn off piece of cloth from the guy’s shirt before sheathing it. I used the wall to support myself up. I coughed softly and looked at the corpse on the ground speechless.

His eyes weren’t even shut. Nier pierced his heart in that split second. I knew it’d end this way which is why I told them to run. I couldn’t stop Nier. Even a mugger shouldn’t have to die. Someone just died before me as if it were nothing.

I couldn’t erase his terrified eyes from my mind. I don’t get it. I don’t understand why Nier kills so casually. I’ve never killed anybody. Heck, I’ve never hit anybody before. I used my hand to wipe the now cold blood off my face. I looked at the pool of blood underneath the corpse that was getting bigger and bigger. I was scared whenever I saw his eyes... I’ve never killed anybody and yet now somebody had just been killed in front of me without rhyme or reason. His corpse was slowly turning cold, while the person who took his life was standing to one side without any guilt as if nothing had happened.

I clenched my fist, looked at Nier and asked in a shaky voice: “Nier... Do you enjoy... Killing people?”

Nier calmly replied: “No.”

“Do you feel guilty about killing people?”

“No.”

Nier looked at me and said: “To me, killing people is both my job and the meaning of my existence. Her majesty saved me when I was about to be sold off to this sort of place to serve rotten nobles and rich families like you. Only the

Valkyries have treated me with equality. Her majesty bestowed me my dignity and gave meaning to my life. My life, honour and everything else were all bestowed upon me by her majesty. I have no way of repaying her, so I can only present her with the heads of her enemies. You've never experienced the suffering I went through. You won't understand the significance her majesty and the Valkyries hold to me. You don't understand us, so don't order us around. Killing people is a job to me, not a hobby. I don't feel guilty about it just as the world doesn't feel guilty in its treatment towards me. Her majesty is the only one who treats us with gentleness and fairness. We devote our loyalty to her majesty. The life of others does not concern us."

I looked at Nier. Her eyes were calm and had no hints of emotional fluctuations. From her perspective, there's nothing wrong with killing people. There are no laws or morals in her world, only her majesty's existence. There's no way that I could convey logic to her because the only being she believed in was her majesty. This was clearly a crazy form of loyalty. Actually, no. This was no longer loyalty.

I scratched my head, sighed and said: "Anyway... Thank you, Nier... You saved me there... But, you had no reason to kill them. They were just mugging me. That's not deserving of the death penalty, yet you disregarded the law and killed him. The fault lies with me... I didn't stop you... Anyway, since you are to follow my orders now, I'm going to give you your first rule you must abide by, and that is, you are not allowed to kill without my permission."

"As you wish, your majesty. But please remember, if her majesty orders me to kill, I will not hesitate to draw my sword."

Nier looked at me calmly. She doesn't have a craving to murder, but neither does she hate it, so she won't question this order of mine.

"That, I'm aware of. I'll talk to her majesty when we return..."

I looked at the bustling streets outside and recalled the painful, grimacing and sad cries that day, as well as the citizens kneeling on the ground not daring to raise their heads. Can this empire's regime truly really continue on this way? You can't rule a country for long with oppression. Do the citizens here fear her or respect her?

I'm not sure.

Nier kicked the corpse blocking the way away, folded her arms, looked at me and said: "Where are we going now, your majesty?"

I looked at her, paused and said: "Let's go and buy some clothes."

"You don't need to buy clothes. There are tailors in the palace."

"I meant buy clothes for you."

I pointed towards her military uniform she's worn for god knows how long covered in blood, held my head and said: "How do you expect me to take you around when you're covered in blood like that...? Let's get you some clothes first before we continue."

"There's no need. I don't need any other clothing. This was handed to me by her majesty so I won't change no matter what."

"Then what about the blood on you?!"

"Sorry for rejecting your offer, but I'm only comfortable in military uniforms."

Alright then... It looks like I won't get to see Nier in a skirt... Patrol soldiers shouldn't give us a hard time if they see her Valkyrie uniform. I responded: "Since that's the case, wrap your cape around you properly. We're heading to the industrial area where the blacksmiths are."

"Understood."

Nier nodded and then wrapped her cape around her tightly. Nier looked really cool with her white cape on. But whenever the memories of the things she does comes to mind, I can't help but feel she's scary, and not cool...

Translator Comments: I have updated the top 2 tiers on Patreon to allow early access to 3 chapters for the super son-con-cons. The Royalty tier (formerly Tian Xia Wu Di), will still have the bonus 2 chapters on top of everything else offered in the previous tiers. I know what I want to offer on top of that for those higher tiers, but that will be something that comes as we hit milestones, since I don't have the means to provide them yet. About the Expand Now function, this is the last test to confirm the algorithm those thieves employ in

their bots. Update: Okay, the expand function doesn't stop their bots. I'll resort to other means now.

Chapter 15

The industrial area and the red light district were different to each other. There were yellow flags over there while there were green flags over here. There was an arched gate over there while the city doors were here. If you wanted to compare, then the buildings in the industrial area were worn out in comparison. It was apparent that the architects forcefully tried to increase the height of the buildings which reached dangerous levels. They were overstretched into the middle of the street dangerously and blocked the sunlight. The ground wasn't even. The ground was uneven and there was the stench of dirty water. When we arrived at the green coloured door on this side it was like we had entered a different world. It was completely different to the bustling and flourishing scenery on the other side. This place stunk like a rubbish dump with the smell of sulphur and rust.

This place must be made up of both the slums and the industrial area. The smell of this area really should be isolated here. This sort of location is ideal for people in the slums working in the industrial industry. Bubbling red and yellow water was also flowing about here.

“It won't work... Look at the materials you gave me. This is all silk. I could help you make some cloth armour if you asked, but it's impossible to make armour with the level of defence you're asking for with this material.”

I disappointedly took back the materials. It's true that the materials mom gave me were very strange. She gave me a bag of Earth Dragon scales and a bunch of silk. She said that only humans could make the armour, but it seems like the humans here haven't even seen Earth Dragon scales before. Humans no longer wear armour. These blacksmiths only manufacture weapons like guns and swords...

I left the building and called: “Nier!”

Nier got up from the ground. The three or so kids in front of her scattered. I

looked at Nier. She still had the hint of a smile on the corner of her lips. I stood there and looked at the kids running away. I looked at their flimsy-haggard clothing, and dirty skin, and asked: “Nier, do you like kids?”

Nier nodded and calmly said: “I do. Because they remind me of my old self when I see them.”

I nodded, turned around and asked the blacksmith behind me: “Do you know any blacksmith who could make this stuff?”

“No human can.” The blacksmith pushed his glasses up, looked at the lines on the barrel and continued: “However, there is a shop that’s never opened for business before at the end of the street. There’s someone there but they’ve never accepted any jobs before. Perhaps you can try your luck there.”

“Thank you.”

After I gave my thanks, Nier and I walked shoulder by shoulder through the narrow street and stepped over small pools of dirty water. The kids here are all disciples of the blacksmiths in the area, or are children of those living in the slums looking for scrap metal. Kids have been looking at us curiously ever since we entered the area.

I was surprised Nier liked kids, and just as surprised that she could smile around them. I never imagined that.

“What are you smiling about?”

I came to the realisation I was smiling. Nier looked at me, frowned and said: “You’re smiling disgustingly.”

“...Forget it. And here I was going to try and improve our relationship.”

“Please abandon such unrealistic thoughts.”

“You might fall for me if we have kids, you know, because of the kids.”

“Please stop harassing me.”

She always talks to me in the same tone! She knows how to smile! She smiled in front of the kids! But, no. She gives me a frown instead. I sighed and we continued on our way.

Is this shop at the end of the street really a shop? I stood at the end of the alley and looked at the wooden door that was almost as black as the walls around it. I wasn't sure if I could entire. This should be the shop the blacksmith mentioned, right? This was the only building at the end of the street.

All artisans and blacksmiths place a sign on their front door indicating if they work with glass, metal or wood materials. This place, however, has none.

I knocked, pulled the heavy wood door open and went inside.

The interior and exterior of the store were the same. The repulsive smell of oil and rust filled the air. There was also the unpleasant smell of something burning. I didn't see any completed products on display when I entered. I just saw a huge desk. On the table were items I was very familiar with. There was a large set square, compasses and pencils. Underneath the drawing tools was a large sheet of paper with a blueprint on it.

The instincts of my previous job kicked-in and I leaned over to take a look at it. It was the blueprint for a gun.

Based on the rifles I just saw, humanity's troops were still using flintlock guns. This is the gun with the most extensive history and the most famous gun model. However, the gun on this blueprint and the rifles outside were different. My eyes lit up. Regardless of who the boss of this place is, they were a smart one. The gun on this blueprint was missing the most important component...

The breach loader.

The current guns of this era were front-loaded flintlock rifles, but the owner of this place had already considered loading ammo from the rear. This will become a huge step forward for humanity. The step where guns went from front-loading to back-loading was the most important step for gun development in the history of guns. The first back-loaded gun blew the front-loaded gun out of the water and laid the foundation for the direction of gun development from there.

This person had designed all the parts of the gun, and the only thing they didn't know was how to design the firing barrel of a back-loaded gun.

I bent over at my waist, picked up the pencil and set square, and added some

stuff to the original blueprint. The earliest back-loaded gun designs were very simplistic. You used a needle to push the paper with gunpowder into the gun to fire it while the sheet of paper would be burnt up. Load it again and you could fire it again. The drawback was that the gunpowder got expelled from the gun and into the atmosphere, but there's no way around that. I really wanted to draw the blueprints for the completed version of back-loaded guns, but I knew I couldn't tamper with history's development. Moreover, if I allow them to be mass produced, there's a chance that humanity will attack the elves.

Given those reasons, I drew the earliest version of a back-loaded gun onto the blueprint. This rifle would basically be one step up from the front-loaded gun.

I enthusiastically drew and wrote on the blueprint. It wasn't hard to me as I studied gun design. This was like an ingrained skill for me. Since I've designed a back-loaded gun, I'll need to design the bullets too... If we were to mass produce them...

"What are you doing?! Don't touch my blueprints, you retard!!"

A sabre swung over to my face where I was crawling on the table as someone roared. The sabre cut through the piece of plank before me. I could see my reflection on the sabre.

"What?!"

Nier reacted in a surprised manner. She drew her long sword and became vigilant of her surroundings. A shadow which resembled a bear angrily stomped out. Nier stepped in front of me with her long sword in hand as she vigilantly watched the oncoming person.

"Little missy, get that useless piece of metal out of my face or I'll pin you up on the wall."

The voice was crude but distinguishably belonged to a woman. Nier shifted her feet. Nier didn't get angry but she remained alert. The lady finally entered the light. Her red and messy hair that looked like a lion's mane was oily. She wore a frown and was clearly unhappy. She wore a vest which revealed her curves but she didn't seem to care. Her arms which were revealed carried muscle you wouldn't usually see on a woman.

“Far out. Young people these days don’t have any regard for anybody these days. They always come and leave without a word, touch peoples’ stuff... Do you know what you just ruined? God damn it. I’ll...”

She picked up the blueprint as she cussed. Her attention was then focused on my drawing.

She started at it intently. Her angry faced turned into a look of surprise. Nier, however, became an awkward existence. She hesitated before sheathing her sword. The woman looked at the blueprint and then at me. The she turned her attention back to the blueprint. Finally, she slammed the blueprint onto the desk and excitedly shouted: “Are you a genius?! Tell me, how did you come up with such a clever idea?!”

“Hmm... Should I call it talent... Or shall I call it inspiration...?”

These things of yours are toys from my perspective anyway...

Translator Comments: If you’ve subscribed to the series on Novel Updates and come after receiving an update, come check it out no later than 20 minutes after Novel Updates sends the update from now. Reason is, I’m doing some volunteer work as a web page designer for aggregate sites. If you just love me to bits which I imagine you do, and want to see my generous gifts for them, feel free to pay a visit.

All my asshole-ness in its glory aside, not many of you read yesterday’s chapter, so if you missed it, here’s the announcement again. You can now get early access to 3 chapters before their official release. See my Patreon reward tiers for more info.

If you came from an aggregate site, I hope you appreciated my gift.

Chapter 16

“So you must be the prince then.”

The red haired lady carefully rolled up the blueprint. She scanned me, smiled and said: “You really are Elizabeth’s child. You look very similar to her.

“Do not refer to her majesty by her name.”

Nier aggressively drew her sword and faced the red-haired lady. The lady sighed, picked up a pair of tongs from the floor, looked at me and asked: “I can teach this young girl a lesson, right?”

“Nier, put your sword away.”

“I won’t let anyone get away with disrespecting her majesty!”

Nier thrust her sword towards her. The red haired lady easily caught it with her tongs. She then vigorously stepped over and pointed the sharp end of the tongs at Nier’s throat. Nier’s sword thrust was extremely fast. So fast all I caught was a blurry afterimage, but the red haired lady caught her sword as easily as if she were picking up charcoal, and reversed the tables on Nier by pointing her tongs at her throat.

Nier staggered backwards and grabbed her throat. Shocked, she looked at her and exclaimed: “Kugh! Th-That’s the royal family’s sword art! That’s her majesty’s sword style! Who exactly are you?!”

“Missy, you should relax. If I have the gall to refer to Elizabeth by her name, then it’s a clear indication that I have the right to do so. I’ll spare you on account of his majesty.”

I quietly whispered: “Nier, apologise.”

The red haired lady threw the sword to the ground and then folded her arms. Nier grit her teeth and showed her dissatisfaction in her eyes, but there was nothing she could do. She could only lower her head and mutter: “Sorry... I

apologise for my rudeness.”

“Isn’t that much better now...? My, I can’t believe you’ve grown up so much already, your majesty... My, my. If we could backtrack in time, you could be the second excellent warrior I trained. But this isn’t bad either, is it? Tsk, tsk. You’re still young and yet so smart. Not bad. Not bad.”

The red haired lady laughed out loud and then leaned over towards me. She wrapped her arm around my shoulders and pressed it on my chest. She had a strange scent on her, but it was still a boob-massage. I drowned myself in their softness. If it weren’t so tough to breathe in here, it would’ve been a blissful feeling...

“You helped me solved those problems so I’ll repay you. Come, tell me, what do you like? Hey missy, what does the prince like?”

Nier looked at me without any expression and then replied: “Women. He just came out of a brothel. He even asked her majesty to bath with him. He’s driven by lust.”

“???”

I looked at her with my jaws open and eyes wide. Did she not understand what I was thinking?! In what way am I a lustful person?! I did that to get you off my tail! It’s not because I’m lustful! If I were lustful I would’ve already pushed you down, okay?! I’m engaged to Lucia and I haven’t even touched her in that way yet!

“Is that so? Isn’t that good? It’s normal at have hobbies as a prince. Come here. Isn’t it simple then? How about you sleep with me then?” She revealed a consoling smile and shifted her strong hands from labour work towards my belt. Hey, hey, hey. Isn’t something wrong here?! Are you thanking me or am I thanking you here?!!

“No, no, no. I don’t have any thoughts along those lines.”

“Oh really? What a pity... I thought you were quite cute...”

She revealed a look of pity and then watched me fix my belt up, and said: “In that case, did you come to me for something, your majesty? I don’t think you would go out of your way to come here just to help me solve my problems.”

I nodded. I took out the materials mom gave me and said: “I do have a favour to ask. I heard that you might be able to create light armour for me using these materials... Please take a look.”

She nodded and took the materials. She smiled and said: “Oh, Earth Dragons. This silk is the magic spell ‘defence’ itself. Earth Dragons can’t be cut because their scales are naturally covered with the ‘defence’ spell. Once you remove the spell on them, you can add them to other materials. Humans won’t be able to recognise that. Leave it with me. I’ll definitely make some armour for you.”

“Wait... Aren’t you human? How do you know so much?”

I looked at her slightly puzzled. She has human ears, but she was so knowledgeable about elves.

The lady laughed and said: “It’s just that I’ve been to the elves’ nation in the past... My past should be self-explanatory from there. Your majesty, leave your order with me. You helped me with the back-loaded gun design so I’ll help you with your armour. First, I need to grab your body measurements...”

“Go ahead.”

She took out a tape measure and went around my body. Her fingers sometimes got naughty, but... I couldn’t say anything... As she got my measurements, she asked: “Prince, do you have any hobbies, such as the women before, money or traditional swordsmanship...? Elizabeth is the strongest swordsman, well, swordswoman in the empire. You have such a gentle personality when you have a mother like that. It just doesn’t fit no matter how I think about it.”

I smiled helplessly and replied: “I... Don’t... Her majesty has never taught me swordsmanship. I don’t have any ambitions for wealth or women... To be honest, I don’t know what I like either. Maybe I don’t have any special interests.”

“Is that right? You’re a king without any desires.”

“I’m not really a king...”

“Of course you are. You’re the one who’ll ascend the throne once her majesty passes on.” She pulled back the tape measure, nodded and said: “That’s about

it. I hope you can come by every day while I make your armour. I have a lot of ideas but am always missing some stuff. I believe you have the intellect to help me”

“Alright. Thank you.”

“Wow. Elizabeth’s child actually uses courtesy. You’re so cute! I can’t believe that woman has such a gentle kid. Let me give you a kiss!”

“No!! Don’t!! I’m suffocating!! I’m suffocating!!”

At the same time at the inner court.

“Puah!”

A young girl flew outside holding her chest which was swollen like a ball as she gasped for air. Her majesty waved the wooden sword in her hand, sighed and said: “How boring. I was using my left hand and it was still so boring... Castell, come spar with me”

Castell smiled helplessly, shook his head and replied: “Your majesty, should you wish to kill me, you need only say so. If the Valkyries cannot defeat you, a scholar without the ability to fight such as myself would not be able to hold a candle to you.”

The empress threw her sword down. Her maids by the side hurried over to serve her a cup of wine. She gulped the wine which was red like blood, then wiped the corner of her mouth and asked Castell: “Hmm... It feels like there’s nothing to do without my son here... Castell, you’ve interacted with my son before. What do you think he wants? Women? Treasures? Or glory?”

“Please forgive me for being frank. His majesty does not want anything. His majesty is not lustful and does not care for wealth. He does not advocate or pursue military goals and does not yearn for glory.” Castell gently continued: “His majesty honestly does not need anything.”

The empress stood silent for a moment. She then sighed and said: “He’s not suited to be an emperor then. An emperor is an emperor because he has ambitions. Only emperors with lofty ambitions and desires can rule an empire. Since he does not want anything or need anything, he’d be no different to a commoner even if he were to be an emperor. My empire would crumble if I let

a commoner inherit the throne.”

“You are right, but the throne must be passed on to his majesty.”

“Hmm... Let’s change him a bit then. Make him like myself...”

The empress stood up, waved the wooden sword, let out a long sigh and said: “Hands soaked with blood can never be washed clean. Once one sees blood, they’ll become addicted to this power. Get him to kill people. He will realise his power as an emperor once he understands that he’s an emperor and has the power to determine everybody’s fate.”

Castell politely nodded and replied: “Understood.”

Translator Comments: Important, for some reason the bonus chapter bar got reset, therefore it’s showing \$10. It’s actually at 50, I’ll post a screenshot tomorrow as proof. I want to be 100% transparent with all of you at all times. I will never pull a Yang Wenli and owe 30+ chapters, not release chapters I promised while providing no explanations, or pretend I never saw comments or questions which put me in a bad light (subjectively speaking). If I do the impossible and not provide the chapters I promised, I will be sure to compensate. If I miss 1 chapter, I’ll release 2 the next release. If I owe 2 chapters, I’ll release 3 the next release. Screenshot this and if I ever don’t make good on my word, throw it in my face and even publicly post it and disparage me. A man does what he says he do whether he feels good, doesn’t feel good, likes it, doesn’t like it, or has a damn boo-boo. If you tell the world you’re going to do something, show up and do it, especially when you’re as privileged as him. The clown takes it for granted. And if you’re a fan of his, I don’t give a shit.

One more thing. I’ve changed my Patreon url to: patreon.com/wujizun

Chapter 17

Nier and I walked to the streets after we left that weird shop. We left the slums and entered the market area. This is the market at the centre of the imperial capital. It's said that as long as it exists, you'll be able to find it for sale somewhere here, which is why I came here to take a stroll. The good part about living with humanity is that I have access to money which is pre-prepared for me.

The currency system of humanity is much more complex than that of the elves. The money that I have on me currently is the currency manufactured by the empire with the empress's face on it. A gold coin here is worth about sixteen silver coins. The silver coins are separated into the empire's silver coins and Castor's silver coins. The difference is the overlapping swords and anchor. An empire silver coin is worth one-hundred bronze coins, while the silver coins from Castor are worth one-hundred and five bronze coins. Based on the principles of macroeconomics taught in university, we know that the value of Castor's silver coins are currently higher than the empire's.

But in terms of quality, they contained pretty much the same amount of silver. The value of coins is determined by how much metal is within the coin. In other words, the amount of silver in a silver coin determines its value.

There should be about the same amount of silver in both silver coins. Therefore, they should be fairly even. People usually invest in the US dollar in foreign exchange investments because the US is large and their currency is versatile. The same applies here when explaining the existence of two currencies. It goes to show that these two have the greatest influence on the market. The empress's empire is powerful and rules over humanity, so logically speaking, she should also have control over the finance system. Yet the empress's empire has two currencies. This fact shocked me. That goes to show the importance of Castor to them.

But it's got nothing to do with me. I looked around at the stalls selling all types of food. There was roasted eel, beer, barbeques, and bread. A variety of food aromas filled the air. I couldn't resist the urge to buy some and taste them.

"Nier, do you want some?"

Nier looked at me and replied: "No."

I hesitated for a bit and then said: "It might taste really good."

Nier folded her arms and coldly said: "I don't eat foods from outside."

I smiled bitterly and said: "Girls like this aren't cute at all."

"The thought of trying to create a cute impression on you has never crossed my mind, so please don't measure me using your standards of girls. Hmph."

I smiled helplessly as I scratched my head. We then reached a storefront. The boss looked at me, and said with a smile: "What would you like to eat? We have roasted eel. They just hit the market and are fresh."

"I'd like a serving of roasted eel and a beer then."

"Sure. Please take a seat and wait for your order."

I arrived at the seat by the table. Nier placed her long sword on the table and sat across from me. She rested her face in her hands as she watched the crowds. She didn't look like she wanted to talk to me. We're always silent around each other if there are no matters to discuss. If I was with Lucia I wonder how much stuff she'd be lugging around by now.

The food here is indeed significantly better than what the elves offered.

The roast eel was soon served up and I dug in with my fork and knife...

Grilled and roast meats are the best wherever you go! I wolfed down mouthfuls of the eel and beer. How nice. Delicious food can really improve a person's mood. Everything that happened before meant nothing now with the eel in my mouth.

Nier continued scanning the surroundings with a cold look. Gourmet foods have no allure to her. I started to suspect if Nier was actually a normal human.

"Nier, are you sure you don't want to try some?"

Nier coldly rejected me: “I don’t.”

I sighed and continued slowly enjoying my food on my own.

Dong Dong Dong

Just as I got to my seventh piece, a bell rang out in the market area. I turned around and saw a stage erected at the centre of the market where the crowd was gathering. The store owner wiped his sweat, looked at me and said: “That’s the market auction that’s conducted every hour. I have no idea what they’re auctioning this time. Last time it was a gold plate from the palace which was supposedly used by her majesty...”

“WHAT?!”

“Nier, calm down! Her majesty never uses gold plates.”

I forcefully pressed down on Nier’s long sword. Her majesty doesn’t use gold plates. I remember she used a porcelain plate last time. But there’s a chance it was used at a national banquet or something. Whatever the case, I need to calm Nier down first!

“...Hmph!”

Nier thought about it for a moment before putting her sword away. I let out a sigh of relief, turned around, threw down a silver Castor coin, and then walked over to the crowd. I’m interested in auctions, but I’m slightly worried. Is it alright to enter an auction without a few million? Oh, wait, there aren’t any servants that’d cost that much here.

I checked my wallet. I still have a fair number of gold coins. It should be enough. Worse comes to worse, I just won’t win it.

“Come and take a look everyone! This is our fifth auction today! The good up for bidding this time is a bit special! It’s a live product!”

“Ooohh!!”

The people below exclaimed with wows while the people on the stage were shouting into a loudspeaker.

A live product? Is it a hound? A horse? Don’t auctioneers usually put those sorts of expensive animals up for sale?

The person on the stage reached his hand out and waved it to indicate to those below to bring the goods up. I tippy-toed up which took a bit out of me to look over the crowd.

What I saw shocked me. It was a girl.

A completely naked girl.

Her hands were tied up with a rope and she staggered as she was pulled to the centre of the stage, and lifelessly knelt down like a beast of burden. She was covered in injuries, but underneath her injuries, her skin was white as milk. Her body was extremely beautiful while her small face was pretty and cute. And her ears...

Her ears were pointy.

She's an elf!!

I took in a cold breath of air, turned around vigorously to look at Nier. Nier still stood there with her arms folded without a care. I looked at her and asked: "Nier, do humans permit auctioning elves?"

Nier shrugged and said: "Anything that belongs to a bankrupt noble family can be auctioned, including servants. She must be a slave of a noble family that went bankrupt. In principle, it's not illegal because they're already bankrupt. As such, they can deal with their things as they please."

"But... Auctioning people..."

Nier growled: "How are elves any different to dogs?"

Her eyes showed a rarely seen expression of rage and she tightened her grip on her scabbard as she continued: "The elves killed so many of our people ten years ago. If I could bid, I'd buy her so that I can personally decapitate her."

"Both sides are equally to blame in war! It's not her fault!"

Nier closed her eyes and said: "You're a mixed-blood. It doesn't matter to you who wins, but it's different for me. I became orphaned because of that war."

"Alright... I certainly can't understand your pain... But... I'm going to buy that elf."

“Join the auction then.”

Nier opened her eyes to look at me and said: “You’re the person that has an entire kingdom to himself.”

Translator Comments: Drop by 15 minutes-ish from now after you get a notification from NU. I saw a comment about a Discord. The answer is no. There’s no real point, I don’t know how to work the darn thing, there’s a myriad of ways for you all to discuss the series as is, and if it was more so that you could get quicker answers out of me, then that’s not going to happen as I don’t have chat windows or whatever you call them as I work, and most of you should already know my work habits.

Chapter 18

The elf on the stage was kneeling. She looked at the people below with her frightened emerald eyes. The people below whistled as they got excited from seeing her nude. There were even people who reached their hands up on stage to touch her. The elf who didn't even budge bit down on her lip as she allowed all those oily fat hands to touch her thighs. Her reservoir of tears must've dried up long ago. Her eyes were completely swollen, leaving me wondering how long she had cried in silence.

"Alright, let's examine this product. She is a bright adolescent elf-girl. She was originally a maid. The Noble family Ente went bankrupt so this girl was sold here... Yes, she's not a virgin, but you should all be aware by now that the body of female elves are a lot more alluring than that of human girls. Would you gentlemen not want to buy her and make her your wife?! She would make a perfect toy! Bidding will start at ten Empire gold coins. Ten Empire gold coins!"

Ten Empire gold coins is a massive amount. Normal artisans and farmers would never see a single Empire gold coin, only large amounts of bronze coins. I saw a lot of people reach out to touch her, but very few raised their hands to place bids.

"Eleven Empire gold coins!"

Somebody beside me finally called out a bid. The host immediately turned around and wrote, eleven, on the blackboard. He then shouted: "Eleven Empire gold coins! Eleven Empire gold coins. Does anybody have a higher offer?!"

A man dressed in an elegant robe from the other side raised his hand and called: "Fifteen Empire gold coins!"

"Fifteen Empire gold coins! Fifteen Empire gold coins! Anyone with a higher offer?!"

I raised my hand and called: "Sixteen Empire gold coins!"

The host immediately turned around, pointed to me and said: "This young man has offered sixteen Empire gold coins. Say, young man, your bodyguard beside you looks even prettier than this elf-girl. Why would you still choose to spend your money like this?"

"Hmm?!"

Nier quickly raised her head up and sent her killing aura over... I quickly pressed down on her left hand holding her sword and smiled helplessly. The host got so frightened he retreated two steps. He then awkwardly turned around and wrote, sixteen, and then shouted: "Anybody else? Anybody else?"

"Eighteen!"

The man in the elegant robe looked at me and shouted: "I've never seen you before, young man. What family do you hail from?"

Huh? How should I answer? The empress's family?

Yeah, no.

I smiled but I didn't answer. I looked at the elf-girl. She had her head lowered as she quivered. She wasn't paying any attention to who was bidding for her. She was probably in a state of utter despair, because she assumed her end would be the same regardless of who she ended up with. I sighed, raised my hand and shouted: "Twenty!"

"Twenty!"

"Twenty-five!"

The man in the elegant robe looked at me again, revealed a smile and asked: "I don't know who you are, young master, but Sir Castell wants this young lady so could you please let me have her?"

"Castell?"

I paused. Castell... Isn't he that diplomat?! Oh, he's somebody I know well.

He thought I got frightened because I paused in a daze. He smiled leisurely, nodded and said: "Good. I sincerely apologise for taking what you like, but this is an order I received. Thank you for your generosity!"

“Okay, are we stopping at twenty five coins?! Are you not going to try bidding any higher, young man? Oh, but I suppose so, since it’s somebody that Sir Castell wants...”

“Thirty.”

I gave them a cold smile. Who cares about your Castell? I’m the empress’s son. I could remove his head from his shoulders if I went back, acted coquettish and used some aegyo*. What could a human do for an elf after he purchases her? Don’t even try to convince me that you’ll take her home. I know you’ll continue to treat her like a toy. I’m the prince of elves. She’s a citizen of mine. I’m already showing excessive leniency by sparing you my fists and yet you want me to give her up?

A sense of irritation came over me. She’s an elf. She’s a citizen of the people I just spent a month living with. She’s of the same race that sprinkled me with flower petals. I have no attachments towards my identity as the prince of humanity, but I did shed blood as the prince of elves. I stood before the Earth Dragons for the elves. I thought I had protected the elves. I never expected to see an elf treated so horribly and violently like this here. I have no way of venting, but I can save her. I must and will save my elves!

“Alright then... Fifty!”

His face turned dark. He then lowered his head and said something to the person beside him. That person nodded and turned around to leave.

Nier, with her arms folded, calmly said: “Your majesty, you’ve only got fifty Empire gold coins in your wallet.”

“It’s fine. I can go back and get more if need be.”

I chuckled coldly and loudly shouted: “One hundred!”

“One hundred and ten!!”

The crowd went “wow” while the host got so excited his hands were shaking. He started shaking after we added a digit to the front of the starting bid of ten gold coins. He then shouted: “One hundred and ten! One hundred and ten! We’re at the point where we’re making bids high enough to purchase land! This young man is wealthy too! Let the bidding continue!”

“Two hundred.”

I raised my hand and casually said: “There’s no reason to continue competing with me, mister. There will only be losses for you if we continue, no benefits, and the same goes for your master. You can get someone to come to my place to get the money. And bring the elf-girl over while you’re at it.”

“Of course I can, but... Where is your residence?”

“The outer court of the royal palace. Please go ask her majesty for your money. Just tell her that it’s what Prince Troy spent to buy a maid.”

I ignored the people around me, took in a breath of cool air, turned around, looked at the man and with a smile said: “I can now tell you my identity. I am the current prince, Troy. Do you still want to compete with me? Or should I say, you might want to go back and double-check if your master wants to fight me for this girl?”

His whole body shivered. He swept his long robe aside, knelt down, lowered his head and shouted: “I sincerely apologise, your majesty! I apologise for my rudeness!!”

“Your majesty!”

Everybody around me swiftly knelt down. Even the host threw the loudspeaker in his hand away and knelt down. The elf-girl vigorously raised her head and met eyes with me. Her eyes were filled with terror. I smiled and took out a tiny hanging bottle.

It was the love potion Lucia made which was effective on me. Only elves would have it.

Her eyes were stuck on the tiny hanging bottle. A second later, large droplets of tears ran down her face...

Yes, I’ll protect you.

I smiled, nodded, and then turned around to ask Nier: “Nier, what now...? What do I have to say now to get them to rise?”

“They won’t get up until you tell them you won’t prosecute them. In principle, they shouldn’t be allowed to see your appearance. Those who see the

appearance of royal family members are to be punished. You're fine. If you were the emperor, you could have all their heads roll right now."

"It's that serious?!"

"Not everybody is allowed to see the royal family's divine appearance."

Nier took a step back. I awkwardly looked at the people around me who were kneeling down and said: "Umm... None of you are at fault. Please rise... Umm... Uhh... Please send this girl to the palace... Let them know it was my order... Oh, right. Here."

I turned around to Nier and held my hand out. Nier paused as she looked at me and asked in a confused tone: "What do you want?"

"Pass me your sword."

"Alright..."

Nier reluctantly handed me her long sword. I threw the sword onto the stage and said: "The guards should understand the situation when they see that sword. Oh right, don't forget to ask for your payment."

"No, no, I dare not! You should have spoken out sooner. We would have gifted her to you if you told us you were his majesty... We dare not... We cannot ask for money..."

I smiled and said: "It may be legal, but I hope I won't see another business deal like this again. Next time, don't let me see any human or elves being sold."

"Understood. Understood. Understood. You're absolutely right. You're absolutely right..."

"Let's go, Nier. Remember to send the girl to my place. Oh, right..."

I walked up to the man dressed in the elegant robe, pat him on the shoulder, gave him a smile and said: "Send your master my greetings. I really appreciated his help."

Glossary

*애교 = Aegyo = Korean word which refers to a cute display of affection often expressed through a cute/baby voice, facial expressions, and gestures.

Translator Comments: I never knew people did machine translations for novels, I really didn't. I am highly against machine translations because they're absolute shit. Why they ask for any form of support when they're using a machine anybody can learn to use? If you do that, you're a joke. I don't even know how they have the gall to attach their name to it. Shame doesn't seem to be a trait they possess. I don't give a shit what their excuse is. I don't use a machine. I use my knowledge and skills. And I will never over my dead body use a machine translator here. If I ever use one for who knows why, I'll slap myself in the face out of principle. I've witnessed people try to translate Korean stuff with a machine translator, and it was so far off in another galaxy, I just left them be while I cracking up. That was genuinely funny. But long story short, I won't be joining that crew, and I will never do something that compromises my quality or integrity here.

That aside, their bot was running circles stupefied so it took a bit longer. I apologise for the delay and shall release another chapter tomorrow to make it up to you. I've figured out the bots run on a clock not an interval, so I'll schedule the release next to it from now. That way you shouldn't see the dummy chapter, and just the authentic goods, the greatness of Nier.

To all aggregate supporters telling them to pretend they translated it, fuck the lot of you.

Chapter 19

“You didn’t perform too shabby back there.”

After we left the crowd, Nier gave me a rare word of praise. I paused, smiled weakly and said: “It was partly because I was angry back there... But... I did strangely feel quite happy when they saluted me. How should I put it? Hmm... It was like... That’s it... I felt exhilarated?”

To be honest, when they saluted me and as I started to feel scared, a strange feeling of excitement suddenly filled me up. I was so giddy when I saw them lower their heads I was lost for words. I’ve encountered people who treated me politely, but not respectfully. Is that the treatment a prince receives? Is that the so-called sense of pride and vanity?

It feels bloody amazing!

I want to try it again!

“That’s normal. You’re the prince. It’s normal for a prince to be saluted by commoners. You’re feeling excited and happy right now because you received the respect you deserve. This street actually belongs to you. You don’t need to spend a penny here if you come out here to play. People will naturally come up to you and shower you with gifts.”

Nier tilted her head, looked at me and said: “You finally have some semblance of a prince now.”

“What?! I didn’t resemble one before?!”

“How were you any different to a commoner before?”

I had no comeback for Nier’s retort. She had a point. Was I any different to a commoner before? Other than being wealthier, was there actually anything that set us apart? I’ve never been a king or prince. Also, in my mind, a good king or prince is someone who’s approachable, someone who upholds the rules and doesn’t take bribes or spend lavishly for selfish ends, which is the same reason

why I didn't accept any gifts from the elves. You can't accept everything people offer you after all.

However, it seems to be different here with humanity. It seems that this is how the power of royalty is meant to be wielded. It's just as Nier said. If I'm not having people kneel before me, salute me, and not having them revere me, then I'm essentially the same as a commoner. I'm the future emperor. Will I become a supported emperor if I continue like that?

Thinking about it carefully, an emperor can seem to have someone killed on a whim because he's the emperor. Everything in this land belongs to him. He can have whoever he wants dead, dead.

I shook my head and tried to remove the dangerous thoughts from my mind. No, no. An emperor should abide by the law even if he is the emperor. Killing people on whims is not a good thing no matter how you put it.

It looks like we've already reached the end of the market. That should be all the tasks to do for today, right? I need to head back and have a chat with the elf-girl. I ran my eyes over the remaining stores and saw a familiar place. I smiled to myself. Nier rejected food, rejected clothing, but she definitely won't reject this.

I walked over and looked at the candies. High-end candies like toffee and the sort don't exist yet. I presume these candies were sugar boiled and then rolled into a ball. There was no packaging, just a ball of sugar, but kids love this sort of junk food most, don't they?

"Here."

Nier stared at me as I handed her a small bag of candy. She then looked at me confused and asked: "This is...?"

"Candy... Now you've got something to give the kids next time you see them." I placed the candy into her hand with a smile, then looked at her and said: "You look cute when you're with children, Nier."

She looked at the candy in her hand in a daze. There was a crude and childish flower drawn on the bag. Look as you may, the combination of her bloodied military uniform and the bag of candy just didn't match. However, she

resolutely put it into her belt. The huge difference in themes made me want to crack up.

Nier went down on one knee, lowered her head and sincerely thanked me: “Uhm... Thank you for your reward, your majesty.”

I reached my hand out to help her up. It was the first time she didn't look at me like I was trash. It was the first time she looked like she was smiling before me.

I told you I wasn't lying. Nier looks bright and beautiful when she smiles.

“Mmm... Uhm... Let's head back.”

I got embarrassed when she looked at me like that. I vigorously turned my head away and suppressed my racing heart. I then took big strides towards the royal palace. Nier casually followed behind. Her smile vanished in an instant, but she still plucked my heartstring.

Ah man. I went red in the face when I saw a girl's smile when I'm a prince. I haven't become conscious of my identity as a prince yet. What I felt before was probably just narcissism...

Inner Court of the Palace...

The empress sat on her chair with one leg over the other behind her black veil, looked at the elf dressed in a maid's uniform and said: “I never expected this... I was going to buy you and let my son kill you, but he got a step ahead of me and bought you first...”

Beside the empress were two Valkyries with their swords drawn. The elf was trembling as she knelt on the ground. It was as though she was completely prostrating herself on the ground.

The empress switched which leg went over the other, and then said with a sigh: “I can't do anything to you now that it's come to this. You were purchased by my son, so all your rights will be determined by him. If I hurt you, he will probably not speak a word to me for a few months as he did in the past... Forget it. Go take care of my son.”

The elf replied while trembling: “Understood...”

“However, remember your place. If you dare to have any thoughts which cross the line while living with him, I’ll personally rip you limb from limb.” The empress then stood up, waved her hand and said: “Take her to the outer court and familiarise her with my son’s life and activities. I’m disappointed that the first time he mentioned my name was for the sake of an elf.”

The two girls looked at each other and then asked: “Your majesty, do we need to bring his majesty here?”

“That’s not a bad idea... But, Mmm... Forget it... If I talk to him again I won’t be able to attend the conference tomorrow again...”

The empress’s eyes were filled with dissatisfaction and anxiety. Being able to spend time alone with her son was the greatest blessing for her, but at the end of the day, national matters still have to be dealt with. As for the matter with Castor, the empress still wanted to hear some more opinions from the elders of both parties instead of going all-in like a hot-head.

“Your majesty, do you really intend not to teach his majesty swordsmanship?”

“No.”

The empress outright rejected the idea and said: “Those who learn swordsmanship must see bloodshed. I can’t stand the thought of my son getting hurt... I’ve already conquered enough land. It’s fine as long as the prince can protect the lands I’ve conquered. I will never let him learn martial arts and let him crazily enter the battlefield. I won’t allow it even if he’s my own kin.”

“Understood...”

The two girls exchanged looks, nodded and then dragged the elf along the ground as they intended to leave.

The empress thundered from behind the black veil: “Stop! Is that anyway to treat the prince’s close servant?! If you don’t respect his servant, then how would you have any respect for the prince?”

The two Valkyries were shook. They quickly and carefully supported her by her arms and slowly left.

The empress pulled open the veil, turned to Castell seated to one side and

said: "Castell, prepare another candidate."

Castell bent over to salute the empress and said with a smile: "There's no need, your majesty. His majesty had everybody kneel for the first time. It was the first time he announced his identity in public. It was the first time he was saluted by all. His majesty has come to understand the power that he wields as a sovereign. I believe his majesty will soon realise that he is different to others."

The empress paused for a moment and then laughed out loud and said: "Hahahaha! My son used my authority to save an elf?! Nice. Nice. No one can give up imperial power, the power of royalty, once they've experienced it. I'm glad. I'm very glad. Castell, go and prepare more events like this so that he slowly begins to understand what it means to have the power of royalty!"

"Understood."

Translator Comments: I hope the site didn't drop for anybody yesterday because I got execution limit warnings. It's the exact reason I post 4 chapters currently until the first milestone on Patreon is reached where I'll then get the upgrades and whatnot necessary to cater for more chapters. How is Nier not best girl when she tells Troy to kill himself so nonchalantly the way she does? It's funny as. Even funnier when she handed him her sword after saying that. Anyway, chapter 20 will drop in 48 hours.

Chapter 20 P1

Castell appeared before me as soon as I entered the outer court. He still had his regal demeanour, his black robe and trademark smile.

“Welcome home, your majesty.”

“Aaahh, Castell. To be honest, I’m quite surprised to see you. I thought you always stayed with the elves.”

Castell asked me with a smile: “No, I was just there to make the arrangements for your return and deal with a few other minor matters. I naturally came back since you have returned. Are you comfortable here?”

To be frank, all the people I face here are people who frighten me, for example, the empress who looks scary but is actually a stupid mother. There’s also Nier who hates me to the extreme for some odd reason. There’s also the loli that can shatter boulders with a single punch. I feel so much more cordial to finally meet someone normal even though I just stole a girl from him not long ago.

I weakly smiled, nodded and said: “I’m alright. I just never expected that human and elven society were so different.”

I thought ballista were already an advanced piece of technology for humans. Then it turned out that ballistae were already an abandoned machine. Did Castell do that on purpose...? But he wasn’t wrong. By that I mean, the elves wouldn’t have been able to produce cannons in those few days even if Castell did suggest cannons.

Castell blinked and said with a laugh: “True. When you came here in the past, you were a melancholic person who never left his room. I am very happy that you took the initiative to leave your room this time. I was surprised that you even bought a girl. Her majesty was very happy about that. It looks like you

have begun to accept the world of humanity now.”

I’m a human to begin with... It looks like the original prince associated more with his elf identity. That means that the war for their son ten years ago was initiated by humanity. I don’t have any means of asking much. I could only helplessly and silently smile because my personality is completely different to the original prince. I think you could look at it like this: I like the life with the elves better, but intrinsically lean towards humanity.

“Your majesty, you returned from outside the palace, am I right? It is unfortunate, but it looks like you will not have any time to rest. You will be very busy very soon. However... that depends on your attitude.”

Castell’s vague words annoyed me a bit. His expression clearly indicated that he knew something but wasn’t telling me. And the corner of his mouth which perked up into a smile was a clear indication he was waiting for me to ask.

I sighed and asked: “What is it?”

Chapter 20 P2

Castell didn't answer my question and instead asked me an odd question: "Before I tell you, please allow me to ask you a question. Your majesty, are you interested in partaking in politics?"

I paused and then resolutely said: "No."

Of course I don't! I can't be as sly as these people! I lived a worry-free life as a young man in the modern day. The only thing I'm confident about is I won't be scammed or tricked. My experience with politics is a big fat zero. Setting foot into politics means becoming a tool to be used by people. And who knows, you might even get tossed aside after they're done with you. Why would I throw myself into that mess?

"I see..."

Castell didn't look disappointed. To the contrary, he still wore his polite smile. He touched his smooth chin and said: "In that case, make your questions and time spent with the two individuals who you are going to meet, equal. The shorter the meeting the better. Make sure not to spend more time with one than the other."

"Huh? What? What two individuals?"

Still baffled, Nier quickly walked up behind me and whispered into my ear: "General Andrea seeks an audience with you. He is already waiting in the guest room. Your majesty, it is best that you see him."

Castell nodded, smiled as he bowed, and said: "Please do not forget what I said. Your majesty, if you do not intend to partake in politics, then I shall not interrupt your business then. Goodbye."

"Alright."

I nodded and then headed to the guest room with Nier. I stopped on the way then and said to Nier: "Nier, come up with any excuse and interrupt us five

minutes after I enter...”

“Understood.”

Nier nodded and looked at me as if she wanted to say something. Her lips budged several times but she didn't speak out until we arrived at the door of the guest room. When we arrived, she bowed slightly, and then stood by the door with her hand on her sword handle. I went in alone. Seated at the large and long table was an old man in military gear decorated with medals and ribbons. His hair had already turned white but his back was straight. His short and haggard hair further emphasised his old and steady spirit.

He stood up when he heard my footsteps. He turned to me and knelt down on one knee. He said in a deep voice: “I, Borsi Andrea, humbly greet your majesty! I wish your majesty the best in health.”

I nodded and said: “Please rise.”

I should hurry and help an elderly person up in this sort of situation, but for some reason, my first reaction was to tell him to rise... I walked to the side of the master seat. He stood at one side and looked at me.

Chapter 20 P3

I pointed to the seat by my side and said: "Please sit."

It looked like an electric current just ran up his entire body. He then sat down. His face was radiating with excitement. Do you need to get so excited just sitting next to me? Or has he taken this as having gotten on my good-side and something for him to add to his list of glories?

"In that case, I suggest the time spending the same amount of time with the two individuals who you are going to meet the same. The shorter the meeting the better. Make sure not to spend more time with one than the other."

I think I understand what Castell meant now... If I'm bias towards one of the two, then I'll become a bargaining chip for them in their political games. To demonstrate that I don't want any part in it, I need to be consistent in my treatment with both of them.

"May I ask what you have come to see me for, General Andrea?"

He looked at me and respectfully said: "Your majesty, I want to ask what you think of the army... You have never asked, but I noticed that you have been active this visit. As a subordinate, I want to know if you are satisfied with my job."

"To be honest with you, I don't know what the army is like in detail. I've just arrived here and haven't seen what the army looks like."

"How about I organise a parade to let you see what our troops are like then?"

A parade, huh...? Truthfully, I've always wanted to see a parade for once... I've only seen them on television before. I want to try standing on one of the moving stations and shout...

I nodded and said: "Go ahead then."

"Understood!"

He seemed to be really happy...

We just chatted about some nonsense after. I felt like he was trying to demonstrate to me that the army was powerful. He even brought up how they killed the elves, one group after another ten years ago. I got annoyed but couldn't show it.

Nier suddenly stood at my side and whispered loud enough that both he and I could hear: "Your majesty, there is someone outside seeking an audience with you."

I stood up and he followed suit. He understood what it meant. He bowed slightly and said: "I shall go and prepare the parade now. Welcome to the empire, your majesty. I will not take up anymore of your time. I shall take my leave now."

"Okay."

I left the guest room, and just as I let out a sigh of relief, a fat man waltzed in... Astonished, I looked at Nier. Nier innocently looked at me. So it wasn't an excuse then!! It wasn't an excuse!! Someone really did seek an audience!

Translator Comments: To answer your question, I've split the chapter into parts to overcome the aggregate thieves, because they've either changed their algorithm or resorted to human means. If it's the latter, this will do them up real good and is easy to edit if they change their bot, as one line differences can cause theirs to crash. Note: You will only get 1 notification from NU for releases, I've made arrangements with NU. I sincerely thank all of you who choose to read the series here and on any other translator's site as opposed to the aggregate sites. It's extremely frustrating to deal with theft on any level, and in any of its forms, and if we as translators end up getting blacklisted by search engines, shit hits the fan for us. And yeah, fk all the scum supporting the aggregate sites while grumbling they want more translations, but do everything they can to make things miserable for us translators.

Translated by [lordobsidian](#)

Chapter 21 Part 1

The empire held a ball today in the Emperor's Palace thanks to that fat chief officer of the treasury. Normally, this palace isn't open because it's usually reserved for the empress to hold banquets. However, this time it was a ball specially held to "welcome the prince home."

Her majesty lent out her favourite palace without any hesitation as soon as she heard I was attending.

The fat man didn't say anything with substance. He just told me how many streets and markets he owned. He then told me I could just take what I wanted when I went to so-and-so. He also told me stuff pertaining to women, which included him having several elf-girls...

Forget kissing up to me or carrying my shoes, he was virtually on all fours kissing and licking my shoes. My mood turned very sour after that...

This place must be specially used for balls. The large hall was empty. The torches used to light the hall were covered with a crystal cover, illuminating the entire hall. The floor was floored with luxurious marble tiles. Treasured works of art were hung on the walls. I think you could have several hundred people dancing in here all at once. All sorts of foods were placed on the two long tables along the two sides.

Several people dressed in gorgeous evening dresses quickly went their ways. The men with glasses of wine in their hands were chattering. Conversations over their drinks were about money and power. The women revealed their warm backs and shoulders. Their fragrances silently carried the scent of their hormones. The reasons people were mingling and lingering around at this ball were because money, power, women and the things men wanted were present.

I bowed to her majesty from behind and said: "Your majesty..."

The empress didn't dress in any sort of evening dress for the ball. She chose

to dress in a military uniform instead. Her long cape dragged along the floor. Several maids beside her helped her adjust her belt and shoulders. She had her back facing towards me, but when she heard me she said: “You’re here, my son.”

“Yes.”

The empress nodded, and then said: “This ball was prepared for you. Do you have a dance partner?”

“I don’t...”

My dance skills are at a high school level... I haven’t danced in so long I’ve forgotten how to as well... Wait, no! I forgot something even more important. I forgot to find a female dance partner! I haven’t attended a ball before so I had no idea what to do. I quickly threw on some formal-wear and came straight here.

Oh, wait. Nier came here with me. I turned around to look at Nier who was expressionless. All Nier did to prepare was change into a clean uniform and clean her shoes. Her belt still had the candy bag and her sword hanging from it. It looked like she had no intention of dancing... She can’t be my dance partner like that, right...?

“Is that so...? Oh well. Just don’t dance then.” The empress softly cleared her throat, and then turned around to smile at me. Her black eyes revealed a hint of gentleness as she said: “Enjoy yourself a little, my son.”

After the maid finished fixing her clothes, she bowed and said: “Your majesty, I will go and get someone to help you with your cape.”

“Don’t worry about it”

The empress waved her hand, turned around to look at me and then said: “Isn’t there someone to help me right here? A son should help her mother with her cape, right?”

“Y-Yeah...”

I still didn’t quite catch on and looked left and right until Nier viciously kicked my leg... I walked up to the back of the empress, and lifted up the portion of her

cape touching the floor. The maid rushed over and folded the cape into my hand neatly, and then said: “Keep your distance. Do not come too close or get too far away. Do not let the cape move in your hands.”

“I’ll do my best.”

The maid sternly exclaimed: “Doing your best is not enough. You must get it right!”

Chapter 21 Part 2

The empress chuckled and then stamped her feet, and said: “Don’t be so nervous, son. You’re my son. Nobody will say anything even if my cape does touch the floor. You’re not a professional at it. I just want to have my own child help me with it.”

“Understood.”

Perhaps it implies that a sovereign is indicating their favour for someone by allowing them to hold the hem of their cape or clothing. We are talking about a sovereign after all. Nobody is allowed to make a mistake around a sovereign, even more so when they’re permitted to accompany the sovereign to such events. The empress adjusted the black veil in front of her face and then said: “Let’s go, son. Haha, this is the first time I’m attending a ball with my son. I’m a bit nervous. Son, I suddenly want to dance with you, what do you think?”

I was so frightened I froze up. I then said: “I uhh... I don’t know how to...”

“It’s fine. Would they dare to laugh if you couldn’t dance? Let’s do it!”

The empress is a little over-excited today...

“Let’s go!”

The curtain before us suddenly opened and the bright-blinding light shined onto my face. The smell of perfumes and food came rushing over together. The noisy chattering in the room suddenly came to a stop. As I held the empress’s cape, I did my best to maintain the tranquillity she was showing. I scanned the luxurious dance hall after my eyes adjusted to the strong lights. I saw the men and women on both sides in lavish clothing bow. The empress raised her head and slowly walked forth with the aura of a sovereign as I followed behind. Nier had her head down with her hand on her sword handle as she casually followed. I was the only one behind the empress shuffling his feet like a clown.

“Long live your majesty!”

Eh?! Their greeting phrase is different this time!

After we crossed the excessively long large hall, the empress turned around, almost pulling her cape out of my hands. I quickly ran in a big circle to try and circle around behind her, but the empress pulled me in towards her by my arm. She then pressed my head against her glorious bosom...

My neck! My neck!!

“Ladies and gentlemen, I came here to participate in this ball prepared for my son by Chief Yin. I’m very happy to know you all care about him. I have led conquests for over ten years, yet only have this one child. I hope that you all will treat him as the future emperor, so that he may soon become a qualified emperor. Alright, I’m very happy tonight. Let’s not talk anymore, please rise. I shall start the opening dance!”

The empress vigorously grabbed my hand. Her hands were different to mom’s hands. Mom’s hands are slender, gentle and warm, while the empress’s hands were rough and had calluses. Her hands looked slender and white from a distance, but when you touched them, you could feel the abrasions accumulated from all of her conquests. These must be the hands of the empress who spent years on the battlefield... She really is different to other people...

Her hands were hands that wielded swords.

The music in the hall started playing. I so can’t dance! I only know casual dances, but... It seemed that the empress couldn’t dance either. She just tightly gripped my hand and hugged me with all her might! She’s pursuing her private interests under the guise of work! This has got to be considered pursuing her private interests under the guise of work!!

This isn’t even remotely dancing!! Can’t you people tell?! Why are you people watching me with envy?! Can’t you people tell?! This isn’t even remotely considered dancing!

Despite that, the empress’s happy look came from deep down inside her. I could see her smile through her black veil. Even the hostility in her eyes disappeared. It must be a very happy feeling to be able to dance with your son as his mother...

The empress's hands were rough...

But, they were warm like mom's hands nonetheless.

Translator Comments: Some have dropped the series, which is both sad and good. Good in that I won't need to sift through idiocy (more on that in a tick) and that they've found this isn't for them. Bad in that we just lost reader numbers. Their reason for dropping it per their words was that this volume is bad. The MC gets disrespected and isn't commandeering humanity after coming to humanity for about a week, and coming face-to-face with people he's never met before, and a world he's never lived in before. First point. Do you not find yourself choosing the elves over the humans? If you do, why? If the humans acted the way the humans did, why not just make them elves? Why would you as a reader be encouraged to choose sides if both sides were the same? Now, make one completely detestable, and I presume you'll choose to side with the other. Do you not think that's the reason the author tries to depict them the way he does? We call it a writing device; creating contrast. Second point. If you're looking for a series with an MC who's going to waltz into a completely different world where everything he ever knew is challenged, and all of a sudden start commanding them and referring to everybody as mongrels as Gilgamesh, I think you should check in with reality. Lastly, Archer who read up to volume 3 states that things pick up a lot more after volume 2 (which is visible to those who bother to actually look before sharing their intellect with the world), so they discredit it before the half-way point of volume 2... What?

Chapter 22

“Your majesty, this is Castor’s envoy, Mr Meriwether Ente.”

I looked at the envoy while Castell who was standing beside me introduced me to all sorts of famous figures, such as the chairman of the business committee or something, and the chief of some army unit, and the chief of some department. The chief before me looked slightly older than Castell. His white hair was disappearing and he did his best to comb his hair towards the middle to cover the bald spot there.

The smile on his face was normal, but his shoulders were rolled forward causing him to look like a camel. He was short in stature. He only came up to the tip of my nose, so he looked like a little clown to me. He’s an envoy just like Castell, but while Castell looked handsome and competent, the gentleman didn’t give me any good impressions.

“Your majesty.”

He bent over to bow before me and then handed me a glass of red wine. When I went to accept the glass of wine, I noticed that the buttons on his sleeves weren’t the same.

I frowned. This meant that he changed the buttons... He’s quite thrifty, but he should’ve at least made sure the buttons were identical... You’re an envoy, you know? If you’re not careful, people might take it as you not respecting this nation.

“Nice to meet you.”

After my simple greeting, I turned around to leave. Castell asked me from behind: “Your majesty, do you understand the relationship between our country and Castor?”

“I don’t. But I have seen Castor currency.”

I turned around and took some honey bread on the table to put it in my

mouth. This sort of bread is called “Empress Bread”. It’s high quality bread that can only be enjoyed after the empress gives you permission to. This bread may be extremely attracting to people right now, but it’s probably only worth spare change in the modern world.

Castell ignored the fact that I was chewing on bread, gave me a nod and said: “Indeed. You are very perceptive. There is a currency issue. You yourself have noticed that Castor is extremely important to us. We do not have any land which allows sea travel. Castor is our only means of exporting and importing goods...”

“You’re talking about a trade deficit right?”

A small country which is able to occupy to half of a large country’s economy would probably have to be a country like Japan. They managed to monopolise imports and exports. I remember Japanese goods were rarely seen among China’s foreign goods. And at that time, they didn’t dump the goods in foreign countries.

“Trade deficit?”

“Oh... That refers to a situation whereby a nation’s imports far exceed their exports... That’s not good.”

“I did not know you were an economist!”

“Puuu!!”

I almost spat my bread out. A primary school child could see the crux of such a shallow problem, and yet you’re praising me for it? But seeing Castell’s surprised look did explain it somewhat.... Such a simple concept... Was not conceptualised before Adam Smith... Wait. Wasn’t Adam Smith already dead by this era?!

Perhaps Adam Smith didn’t exist in this world...

“That is correct. It is just as you said. Castor has goods readily available thanks to their ports. Our nation’s goods perform poorly over there while their goods are things we require. If this trend continues, our nation will become poorer and poorer while theirs becomes stronger and stronger.

Castell looked at me and quietly said: “One of the men you met today was a soldier while the other was a leader of the business industry. At current, the two of them have differing opinions with one wanting to conquer Castor and the other wanting to defeat Castor on the business front. Her majesty, however, has withheld from expressing her views, which is why they are seeking your assistance.”

I helplessly smiled and took a sip of the red wine... The wine here tastes bad... I then said: “They want to fight a trade war when the trade deficit has become so substantially different? Are they courting death?”

“We do not yet have a navy...”

I get it now. As a Chinese person, I understand the pain of not having a navy. We went through a hundred years of humiliation since we have seas yet no navy... But you guys don’t even have seas to begin with! You people are able to have such a flourishing economy precisely because of your vast lands!

“Do you have any opinions, your majesty?”

“No. Didn’t I say I wouldn’t participate in politics? Her majesty will handle it. Why should I get involved?”

I ignored Castell who walked to one side and shook my head. I’m not an economist. I just happened to sit through the compulsory macroeconomics classes. But as my teacher for the course said, we just had to listen. Economics is a complicated subject and exists in a dynamic paradigm. If he could understand economics, he’d be filthy rich ages ago... But because of all those reasons, I understand such shallow topics. I’d rather lead an army to fight a physical war than a trade war. I am a technical staff member trained by the army after all.

“True...”

Castell smiled to himself, then politely bowed to salute me and said: “I hope you have an enjoyable night.”

The party officially started after the empress and I finished our dance. To avoid unnecessary issues, the empress left after saying a few things to everybody. I was left behind along with Castell next to me, who was there to

introduce me to the retainers. And now, it's my free time.

I'm a lot more interested in the delicacies on the tables than dancing. You don't get to see so many colourful dishes every day, but to be frank; there were only a small variety of dishes. It couldn't compare to our Chinese dishes. Oh well, it looks like the variety of available ingredients here can't compare to home.

"Your majesty, could I ask you to dance with me?"

"Sorry... I want to have a rest..."

I turned around and grabbed a few chicken drumsticks and ignored the ladies behind me. I'm not a glutton. It's because I fundamentally can't dance. Seeing them kick their legs and perform their greetings and whatnot felt the same as watching a show. I only know social dancing.

"Your majesty, could I ask you to dance with me?"

"Your majesty, could I ask you to dance with me?"

"Your majesty, could I ask you to dance with me?"

.....

Crap... This isn't good... I can't continue like this... I need back-up. I put my plate down and scanned my surroundings. I saw Nier standing by the door with her hand on her sword handle. I helplessly smiled as I pushed through the ladies surrounding me. I then took a few steps and ran over to Nier's side.

Nier glanced at me and asked in a nonchalant tone: "Is something the matter, your majesty?"

"Nier, dance with me..."

"HUH?!"

Nier turned her eyes and looked at me astonished by what she'd heard. She then returned to her usual expressionless look, turned her head around and said: "I don't know how to dance, and I'm also dressed in military uniform."

"I can't either... And you don't need to know how to either. Just pretend you're dancing with me! I don't want to be surrounded by that group of girls."

“Oh? I remember you really enjoyed being surrounded by women on all sides. How could you possibly not like that? Or is there an empty spot in the group that you want me to fill in? Or do you feel it’s more fun to flirt with me in front of other girls? Please show some self-respect, your majesty. There’s an elf waiting for you in your room.”

Nier, you’re as mean as ever...

I helplessly smiled as I scratched my head and then said: “What if I ordered you as the prince? I order you to put your sword and dance with me.”

Nier looked at me. She let out a heavy sigh and wore an uncompassionate look. She removed her sword from her belt and said: “I don’t know how to dance, so please forgive me if I happen to step on your feet.”

“I ask that you forgive me as well if I step on your feet...”

“I won’t. I’ll return the favour and stomp on your feet.”

Wait a second!!

Please. Wait a second!!

Did Nier just crack a joke?!

And thus, in the midst of this ball with many famous retainers and notable figures, in the midst of this ball with many madams and young ladies of prestigious households, his majesty’s dance partner was none other than a girl in military uniform and boots who wore an unlovable expression. She held his majesty’s hand and spared no effort in trying to stomp on the prince’s feet...

Both you and her majesty are pursuing your own goals under the guise of work!! You want to legally stomp on my feet! Isn’t that right?! I’m right, aren’t I?!!

IMPORTANT: I’m on my back leg for monthly execution allowance limits, so the site is going to drop at some point. If you notice this, keep an eye on Facebook and Patreon. To sustain the 4 chapters per week promise, I’ll release chapters there. Patron early releases will not be affected.

Translator Comment: I apparently lashed out in my attempt to point out that certain criteria don’t make a piece of literature bad, and making a point that it is

a matter of like or not like; a subjective opinion, not an objective evaluation, therefore de-valuing a review. For that I apologise. I had no idea that trying to give a heads up and also mentioning that if certain elements will bother you as a reader, then maybe it's not for you, happened to be so offensive. I have to plead ignorance on that. I didn't know that. I'm sorry for trying to help you avoid being triggered by reading something you don't like. I ask that you find it in your heart to forgive me. And please do not ask me about the series as I will refrain from answering questions pertaining to the series to avoid such circumstances again.

Chapter 23 Part 1

“Nier...”

Nier, who was by my side, shifted her face over and quietly said: “Your majesty, I...”

I pressed my body against her body with all my bodyweight. Nier softly coughed. She ran her emerald eyes over me with disdain and disgust. She straightened her back and looked at the side of my face. She softly said: “If you can’t hold your liquor, why’d you drink so much? You look ridiculous for a prince. You make her majesty and the empire look bad. I beg, please kill yourself, alright?”

“Why...? Didn’t I just drink a little too much?”

Nier helped me upstairs. This was the first time I felt the staircase was never ending. To be fair, for a terrible tasting wine like that to get me drunk is quite the feat. The truth is I purposely got myself drunk so I could leave because I didn’t want to socialise with those people.

Only afterwards did I find out that I could’ve just said so and left. There was no need for me to get myself drunk.

This is why Nier had to help me to the door. Nier trained as a Valkyrie since she was young so her strength was comparable to a flower-boy. That said, it was still difficult for her to help a man weighing more than one-hundred kilograms up the stairs. This was the first time I saw Nier’s boobs move as she huffed and puffed...

Nier has a pretty hot body...

“Your majesty, I never feel humiliated by the gaze of others on myself, but why is that I feel an impulse to kill you when you look at me?”

“Don’t you always have an urge to kill me?”

“Since we’re finally on the same page, please kill yourself.”

“WHY?!”

I pushed the door open and Nier tossed me onto the bed as if she were throwing out trash. She let out a heavy sigh and said: “Alright, goodnight. I’m going to rest now... Whoa...”

That scream should’ve come from my mouth shouldn’t it?! Why is there another person on my bed?! I was going to crawl into bed and sleep after Nier tossed me onto the bed, but when I landed on the bed, it didn’t feel soft. Wait, no. A better question is, it felt soft, but why was the soft thing I came into contact with warm...?

I then heard a cough... I opened my eyes and found that my face was buried in two valleys. Two powerful warriors were battering my face and something with the colour of cherries caught my eyes.

“WHOA!!”

I shrieked and then rolled off my bed onto the ground with a loud thud. The girl on the bed shyly pulled the blanket over her body, sat up to look at me and said in a sobbing tone: “Y-Your majesty... Umm.... Umm... Please be gentle with me...”

I noticed Nier who was on the other side of the bed looking at me with disgust. She bowed slightly and then said in an extremely disdainful tone: “So that’s what you bought the elf for. You really are an animal of lust from head to toe. I thought you bought her out of good intent. I never thought that you did it to fulfil your lust. You really are a disgusting prince, huh? I now fear for myself as a girl by your side... But I can’t comment too much on your business. I hope you enjoy yourself...”

“Wait! Wait, Nier! This wasn’t my order! I’ve never seen her before!!”

I seemed to be awoken from my drunken stupor. I held onto my butt which hurt from my fall and got up. I looked at the elf before me, unsure whether I was meant to laugh or cry and said: “Umm... Say... It’s nice to meet you. I’m Troy... Before you introduce yourself, could you please tell me why you’re on my bed...?”

She tightened her grip on her blanket. She lowered her head and said: “B- Because I’ve always.... I’ve always done this... That’s how they always... Used me... I thought...”

I rubbed my head and said: “Oh, you don’t need to do that with me. Didn’t I tell you that I bought you to work as a maid? I don’t intend to do that with you. Just work as my maid and look after this place. Don’t worry about a thing... Go get dressed first, and then let’s talk about what you’ll do from now on.”

The elf gripped the blanket and got off the bed from Nier’s side, and then ran into Nier’s small room. Nier folded her arms and looked at her room before looking at me. She tilted her head.

I looked at Nier with a slight sense of guilt and said: “Well.... I did say I didn’t have those sorts of thoughts, right? I honestly didn’t arrange this...”

Wait a second. What do I have to feel guilty about?! Why am I so afraid of my bodyguard?! I’m the prince! What can you do about me if I sleep with a woman? And every emperor has a harem, so how could I call myself an emperor otherwise?! Just why do I feel like a little kid before Nier...?

Nier pinched her chin, looked at me and said: “I’m surprised you didn’t do anything. I now suspect if you’re a normal man...” This lass is getting more and more arrogant! She doesn’t even seem to consider me the prince!

What exactly do you want?!

I grit my teeth. I don’t know where I got the gall from. Maybe the wine? I looked at Nier, grit my teeth and made an order that Nier would mock me for countless times later on: “In that case, I’ll prove to you that I’m a normal man! Nier! I order you as the prince of the empire! Let me rub your...”

.....

I hate silent atmospheres the most.

Chapter 23 Part 2

I regretted what I said as soon as it escaped my mouth. Unfortunately, it was already said and done. Nier looked at me with a look of surprise and contempt. Her gaze changed this time. She looked at me like kitchen waste. No. More like she was looking at regurgitated food. She shook her head, let out a heavy sigh and then reached her hand up to undo the buttons on her clothes...

“Wait! Wait! Wait!! Stop!! Please, stop!! Don’t! Don’t! Don’t! Sorry! Sorry! I was joking! I was joking! Honest!”

I waved my hand like I lost control and turned to my side. I really wanted to slap myself. Did I get mercury in my brain or something? How could I make such a request...? Nier’s hands didn’t stop. She then took off the top layer of her military uniform and undid her button, revealing the cloth she used to wrap her breasts. She walked up to me and said: “Your majesty, I shall obey your orders.”

Nier’s body is very beautiful. I don’t think there was any fat on her body. I don’t think I could pinch any fat on her waist. She had the coveted eleven-abs*. She had a few scars but that didn’t diminish her beauty. She wrapped her chest cloth but I could still see the prominent shape of them. If she were to undo it...

“Do I need to undo this as well?”

Nier’s gaze was filled with hate and disgust. Her hands, however, continued to undo her chest-cloth without hesitation. I reached my hand out and pressed it on her shoulder.

I took in a deep breath. I can’t do this sort of thing... Nier hates me to begin with. I can’t do something that will completely wreck our relationship... I shook my head, paused and said: “Th-There’s no need to... I... I’m in the wrong. It’s my fault. I shouldn’t have made such an overboard request...”

“Your request was not overboard. You were just going to touch my body. It’s

just that being touched by you is so disgusting it's vomit-inducing, that's all."

Her gaze indicated she wasn't lying. I just pressed on her beautiful shoulder and her eyes were filled with disdain as per usual.

"Are you complimenting me or cursing me?"

Nier mercilessly replied: "Of course I'm cursing you."

I stood up with my back facing Nier. Nier stood up as well. At that moment, the door to Nier's room opened... Nier and I turned to look in that direction. The elf dressed in her black and white maid uniform looked at us, shocked... In that moment, we... Yeah... Nier's clothes were still on the floor and she was also still on the bed...

"I'm so sorry!!"

After she shrieked, she closed the door loudly and hid inside...

It's not like that!! Listen to my explanation! Listen to my explanation!!

Glossary

*Eleven abs are technically called the Adonis Belt, however, it's popular among women to refer to it as so as opposed to the Adonis Belt, so I went with it.

Translator Comments: I tried to contact as many of you personally on Disqus as I could, but only Chris responded so I suppose (A) the method didn't work, or (B) you didn't see it. I'm referring to getting this chapter into your hands because I'm enough of an asshole enough to try and contact as many people as possible individually. Second, the website is only temporarily up with half the usual daily allowance, so if it drops, it's beyond me. This situation will stand until next month. Lastly note here is that there is a double release, so chapter 24 is up too.

Chapter 24

Dungeon of the inner court...

Nier walked at a relatively fast pace. She sneezed as she passed through the complicated passages with a fire torch in hand. She finally saw the empress dressed in black deep inside the prison. The empress was kneeling down and gently caressing a black hound's head by her side. When the hound stood up, it was taller than a human. Its eyes didn't look friendly like a pet-dog. To the contrary, its eyes were filled with aggression. It resembled a wolf more than a hound.

However, the wolf obediently knelt by the empress's side, not even daring to wag its tail. It was afraid of the empress. Even a wild animal is afraid of the empress.

"Your majesty!"

"Oh, Nier, you're here. Come over here and tell me if it was these people."

The empress looked at Nier who knelt down on one knee before her. She stood up and rubbed her head. She then waved her hand, and the Valkyries on both sides responded by extended their hands which shone a light on the dying women who was kneeling before the empress. Their bodies were covered in blood and wounds. Their hands and legs were bent and contorted in odd ways. They must've been subjected to torture just before.

Nier nodded and said: "That's right. Those are the women that touched his majesty in the brothel. That should be the boss-lady of the brothel, and this lady is..."

She reached her hand out, grabbed the lady by her black hair and lifted it up as if she were harvesting a carrot. The lady had already lost her tongue and teeth, so she could barely make a sound. She scanned everything around her

lifelessly. If her mouth and nose weren't still trembling, then nobody could've told that she was still alive.

"This one is the one his majesty chose."

The empress waved her hand and Nier knew to let go. The empress pressed down on the black lady's face with her knee. She raised her head up so that she was looking at the empress with her lifeless eyes. One of the Valkyries who stood to a side took out a small bottle, and then poured it down her mouth full of blood. A moment later, her lifeless eyes and body were replenished with life, albeit her eyes still looking terrified. She mumbled something as she looked at the empress.

"Black hair... Black eyes... Hmmm... So my son likes this type, huh...?"

Nier quietly said from behind: "Your majesty, you have black hair and black eyes."

The empress froze for a moment, and then spun around to look at Nier. Her expressionless look suddenly turned into a shy smile. She reached her hand out and roughly rubbed Nier's face, and giddily said: "That's right! That's right! I... I have black hair and black eyes!! I... Yeah, I do!! This woman... My son uses me as his standard for desirable women! My son... I'm the woman in his heart! It's me!!"

Nier, whose face was getting rubbed and squished into all sorts of different forms by the giddy empress, spent a lot of effort to say: "Y-your majesty... I... I think... Being seen as a woman... By your s-... Isn't... Good..."

"No, no no! That goes to show that I have a place in his heart. It shows that I'm a woman that he wants to keep in his heart forever. I get it. I get it. I was once told that men look for women that resemble their mother. It looks like my son has accepted me as his mother! He sees me as his mom, and not some blonde woman!"

The empress, still giddy, let go, crouched down and happily rubbed the hound's head. The happiness of the empress seemed to rub off onto the hound, as it stuck its tongue out and panted excitedly.

"All is good, all is good. I'm very happy!!"

The empress stroked the face of the lady with black hair. The lady with black hair cried tears of joy. After the empress reached her hand out, the Valkyries by her side dragged the black-haired lady out, leaving just a few women behind.

“You people dared to touch my son with your dirty hands...”

The empress wore a cold smile as she raised a bowl of blood up and poured it down onto the women, completely drenching them in the scent of blood. The hound got stimulated and stood up. However, without the empress’s orders, it could only pant excitedly and didn’t rush over.

“I’ll forgive that woman. But as for you, I will never forgive you. I will only allow my son to marry a woman I approve of. As for offing you sluts, let’s just interpret it as me doing some purification work... No, wait... That’d be somewhat boring...”

The empress was supposed to order the hound to jump them then, but just as she was about to wave her hand, she hesitated. She then whispered into Nier’s ear and Nier nodded. The empress elegantly turned around. Her cape which her son held in his hand was now soaked with blood. After she left the dungeon, Nier and the Valkyries left as well.

No one would find out that there was a hound that hunted humans down there once...

And the hound was the victor.

Day two...

I left the palace again and went with Nier to that street filled with the stench of sulphur.

I’m in a really good mood today. It was the first time I’d been called awake by a beauty dressed in a maid uniform. This is the isekai life that everybody else and I desire. You need a maid that wakes you up. It’s a must. The elf was kidnapped during the war ten years ago. At the start, she just carried out simple maid work, nothing of “that” sort. She was given to the creditors to mess with after the noble family went bankrupt a few months ago. After the creditors got bored of her, they sold her off.

Women are nice to have, but money is still more comforting.

Her name is Luna. However, she just won't believe that I'm the elf prince. I initially thought she'd recognise me.

"The prince must be a pure-blooded elf. He can't be a half-blood! So you can't possibly be the prince of elves!"

Well, nothing I can do about it... And there's no need for me to prove I'm the prince either...

Nier left in a rush last night and came back without being covered in blood in any form, so it indicated that she didn't kill anyone last night.

I almost got lost this morning. I went according to the path I took the first time so I used the brothel as one of the checkpoints, but when I got there this morning, it was no longer there. It had been replaced by a bank... They couldn't have changed owners overnight, right? I queried the manager, but the manager of the bank swore that he'd been operating his bank here for over ten years and that I'd made a mistake.

I noticed the yellow flag overhead and felt a little stupid...

Did I really get lost...?

"Big sis! Big sis! You're back!"

After I jumped over a puddle of water, a group of kids gathered around. They ignored me and flocked to Nier who was behind me. They surrounded Nier and chattered endlessly. You just met her yesterday, why are you acting like you're having a family reunion...?

Nier smiled and crouched down. She reached her hand out to scrub their heads. When will this gentle version of Nier treat me... I smiled helplessly and leaned on the wall to watch them. I'm in no rush. I just came to check on the progress. The kids surrounded Nier and I could tell that she really liked kids.

"Oh yeah, I brought some candy for you today."

After they greeted each other, Nier took out the small bag of candy from her belt. She opened it and placed a ball of candy into their dirty hands. The kids cheerfully put the candy in their mouth and loudly exclaimed: "Thank you, big sis!"

“You don’t have to thank me. It was his maj-... Ahem... It was this mister here that bought it for you.”

The kids turned their attention to me. I lazily raised one hand and said with a smile: “Just thank Nier. I bought it for you because of Nier. There’s no need to thank me.”

The kids cheerfully laughed out loud. One of the slightly older boys excitedly looked at us and shouted: “In that case! Big brother! Are you two lovers or husband and wife?!”

“Uhh...”

Look at your big sis, Nier’s gaze. What sort of wife or girlfriend do you think would look at her husband or boyfriend like she’s looking at trash like that...

Translator Comment: Someone once said (directed towards me) “Or he could be a decent human being and not be an asshole about it? Be the better man instead of a child?”

I took the advice to heart. I ascended from human into king status. And I also decided to become a better man, instead of a child.

But a “better man” was too vague of a definition, so I followed the synonymous version of it and followed the advice to become a bigger man.

VVVV



Chapter 25

I pushed open the door to the red-lady's shop, and the smell of metal filled my nose once again.

She raised her head from among a pile of random metal devices to look at me, and waved her hand casually to greet me: "You're here, prince."

I think the most awesome figure in the city must be her...

"Hey, uh.. Big sis!!" Just as I was to call her aunty, I saw her emit a dangerous light from her eyes so I immediately changed my choice of words. She nodded with satisfaction, folded her arms across her breasts and waited for me to speak. I looked at her and said: "Umm, I want to discuss my..."

"Oh, your armour, right? It's done. That piece of armour was actually very easy to make. You just have to purify the 'defence' spell into pure magic and then cast it onto something else. I prepared some undergarments for you and then cast the spell onto it. I also increased the strength of the spell. Hmm... This is the one."

She carefully took out a white undergarment that looked very normal without any decorations from a paper bag. There was just a coat of arms added to the chest region. It's the same one as the twin-headed eagle in the palace. Perhaps the coat of arms was something that belonged to the royal family. She shook it around and then placed it on a shelf to the side. She then handed me a flintlock pistol and said: "In the past, the Earth Dragons weren't able to defend against arrows or piercing attacks from spears due to their fragile scales. However, their reinforced silk can. A strong beast may be able to break a wooden cage, but it can't break a net made from rope. Fire the gun at the undergarment and see for yourself."

No matter how I looked at the undergarment, I just couldn't see how it had

any defence capabilities...

I picked up the loaded flintlock gun and pulled the trigger. An ear-piercing sound rung through the room. The smell of smoke made Nier frown and back up a few steps. I fanned the white smoke away with my hand, and walked up to the undergarment. I've never used a flintlock gun, but I wouldn't miss at such a close range, right? The garment floated in the air. The red haired-lady grabbed it and lay it flat on the table.

There wasn't so much as a mark on the garment. The red-haired lady bent over, threw a black bullet onto the table and proudly said: "See that? It's all thanks to me adding the spell to the silk. That's why I said that no blades could penetrate this piece of armour. However, this garment won't reduce the impact behind a strike. It can reduce it a bit, but... In other words, if I were to fire a shot at your back, the bullet won't pierce you, but the impact of the bullet will still thump you."

I nodded and said: "I know." The bullet won't hit my flesh, but the armour can't nullify the impact entirely. But as long as it doesn't reach my flesh, getting hit by a flintlock gun like that would only cause me to stagger or some bruising I reckon.

"It's just that this sort of stuff requires quite a bit of material. If we were to use Earth Dragon scales to make an Earth Dragon scale armour, then this garment could be exchanged for five Earth Dragons scales I reckon... Oh, right. There's also this. You gave me an extra bag of scales, so I created an additional chest plate. There wasn't enough material for anything else, so I had to go with a chest plate."

She took out a vest which was significantly smaller than my torso. I smiled helplessly and said: "I already have this garment, so why do I still need that chest plate?"

"Because if I were to purify it, then that bag of Earth Dragon scales would be nothing more than Earth Dragon scales. You can't complain about there being too much of this sort of stuff, right?"

She shrugged with an "I don't care" attitude. She then turned to look at Nier and said: "You can give it to your bodyguard. She'd be more at ease and safe if

she couldn't be hurt by blades, right?"

Nier paused, and then asked in a shocked tone: "HUH? I can have something like that?!"

I looked at her, scanned her, and then handed her the vest. Better weapons and better armour are forever pursued by warriors. Nier won't be moved by diamonds and jewels, but this vest will definitely please her.

"Take it. I have the undergarment already, anyway."

I generously handed her the vest. Nier paused. She took in a deep breath, bowed down and took it with two hands. She then said in a loud voice: "Thank you for your reward, your majesty!"

"Let's go with that then... Wait. Don't undress here!!"

I reached my hand out and pulled Nier's hand away from her buttons. I know you're excited but could you please not undress in front of me a second time?! Nier was excited like a kid that just bought a new toy and wanted to try it on... But I wonder if the vest will fit her given her top proportion...

Stop! Stop! Stop!! What am I thinking?!

"If you want to change, go change in my room at the back." The red-haired lady pointed to the room at the back. The possibility of me being attacked didn't even cross her mind. She jogged over to the room. The red-haired lady sighed and rubbed her messy red hair. She then looked at me and said: "It doesn't look like you're about to leave. You have something else you came to see me for, right?"

I nodded and said: "Yeah. I want to see what tools you work with... I want to make a gun."

I've thought about it seriously. I can't produce an automatic gun right now. Forget guns, I can't even produce the bullets for it. Even if I want to create a firearm, I'm limited to paper ammunition. I know how to create the ammunition itself, but I have no way of creating the shell. Given those restrictions, paper ammunition is the best fit.

Thus, there's only one gun model I can create. There's no meaning in me

creating a back-loaded gun which can be produced right now. I want to make a gun that can fire consecutively, a weapon I can always carry with me. What came to mind was a revolver. Yes, the gun that has six bullets.

Of course, I can't create it with the techniques of the modern day. I'll consider it successful as long as it can fire successive shots. I once created a revolver during a practical one year while in school. I successfully made the revolver and the bullets using machines and materials. I successfully fired fifty-five rounds of six shots.

If a flintlock gun can be made, then I can create a revolver, even if it's extremely basic.

And yes, that's under the condition that I have the required tools. I don't have spare time to go creating a lathe. If I had that much time on my hands, I'd directly use a lathe to create metal bullets... Since flintlock pistols can be made, I don't think it can be that hard to make a revolver.

The red-haired lady didn't entirely understand what I was getting at but she took me on a tour of her workshop nonetheless. What surprised me was that there was a lathe here. And this model was a relatively developed model. She proudly pat the lathe before me and said: "I was the one that improved this thing. Previously, I used it to control blade pieces by virtue of experience. But I can manufacture a tool of any dimension you want. Further, I have more materials here. What sort of material are you after?"

I excitedly checked out the familiar workshop. The workshop had evolved to look like more recent ones. I don't know this red-haired lady's background but the technology of her workshop had reached the standard of the nineteenth century already, and the first revolver happened to come about in the nineteenth century.

I think it'll be a walk in the park for a twenty-first century light-weaponry student like me to make a gun about the same as that then.

"That's great. Big sis, I'll draw a picture... Umm... Don't make this gun for anyone other than myself... It's reserved for the royal family's use only. Reserved for the royal family... Yeah... Something like that..."

I don't know swordsmanship, nor do I know how to use magic. I'm helpless

and always relying on Lucia and Nier to protect me when I'm with them. Courage is a virtue, but courage without strength is nothing more than recklessness.

My only weapons are my brain and my knowledge. I'll have the courage to take on a group if I can make myself a revolver.

I've finally got the chance to show off my skills as a modern person after coming to this different world!

Translator Comments: On the 8th July, I said the goal for it was to crack rank #450 on NU. I don't even know what the rank number means, but it increases every time I upload a chapter, so screw what it means, it's an indicator of something. I did it, I cracked #450, and #400, photo proof below. On the 3rd July, there were 113 likes on the Facebook page, and today there 171 likes. I never set a goal for it because it's beyond my control, but the new number looks good. So this month, I'm aiming to crack #300 on NU. I'll give 100% every day again, and let's try and crack 200 likes on Facebook. I'm going to keep pressing to try and get the rights to translate it officially, but things take time when it's a first for everyone involved, and they're not the most responsive of people. I know patrons are getting more chapters in advance than it says there, but you can't have too many son-con chapters. Goals are set, now to smash them. The commitment to my goals keeps me disciplined and accountable.



Chapter 26

Son-con – Vol. 2 Ch. 26 (Added Chapter)

“Since you elders are here today, let’s not let what happened a few days ago happen again. I see that General Kurt and Federline are also here. What do you two have to say today? Ah, right, before that, Kurt, I want to know how Andre’s arrangements for the parade you had planned for my son are coming along.”

The empress sat behind the black veil and spoke in a cold tone without a hint of compassion. Kurt turned around to look at Andre, and Andre froze because he seemed to be put on the spot. He fidgeted around a bit and then answered in a shaky voice: “Your majesty... I... I overlooked the fact that the garrison guards had just finished their exercise. The soldiers and horses are worn out and are not in condition to put on a parade...”

The empress shouted: “Useless!”

Andre shivered with fear. His formerly steady eyes became filled with terror in a split moment. He knelt down with a thud, his entire body quaking, not knowing what to say.

The empress angrily stood up and violently shouted: “Useless scum! Does the army get vacations?! If enemies were to attack our imperial city, are you going to tell them that our troops are fatigued, ask the enemy to let them rest for a few days and ask to fight at a later date? The parade is to be conducted the day after. You have one day to rectify the situation with the army. I’ll kill whoever doesn’t look in optimal condition on the day of the parade! You’re not exempt!”

Andre trembled as he replied: “Understood!”

The empress sat back down on her throne, took in a deep breath and then said in an annoyed tone: “I led the army for ten years, and never once did I hear the soldiers complain of fatigue. Why is it that there are more and more

problems after you generals took command? You complain about this and complain about that. I didn't complain once when I had to face armies with more than five times the armoury or supplies. I gave you my trust, so I hope that you'll return my kindness with merit!"

General Kurt bowed and respectfully replied: "I will, your majesty."

Andre is the commander of the imperial army. In terms of ranking, he's lower than Kurt. The empress changed her legs position and then said: "Kurt, Federline, what are your opinions on the matter with Castor? I don't want to hear your analysis, just give me your conclusions."

"Understood, your majesty. Umm..."

It took quite a bit out of Federline to get his fat body off the ground. He raised his hand which had jewels fitted on every finger and said: "Your majesty, I am a merchant. Based on my judgement, if we try to control the business front solely, then our empire will suffer great losses. I believe that only by combining our efforts with the army will we achieve complete victory."

"Your majesty, I believe that it will not be a problem for our troops to capture that city. Their navy is of no significance to us as we can sink their ships when the war starts." Kurt looked in the direction of the empress and firmly continued: "Castor is but a mere city. If we can destroy a country, conquering a city is but child's play."

"General Kurt. If I needed that city, I would've conquered it years ago."

The empress supported her face on her hand as she sat on her throne. She sounded tired as she said: "What I want right now isn't land. Our empire has enough land and territory. Castor's religions, their peoples' lifestyle, their culture and traditions are completely different to ours, so it's very easy for us to come into conflict. If we act rashly, our businesses there may run into the ground. I want to maintain its status quo. Does our army have the ability to siege their city and force them to surrender?"

"I believe it will be very difficult as they have sea access."

Federline answered first. With an idea in mind, he said: "We cannot completely trap Castor, but if we point our heavy cannons at the city gates

towards them then that will serve to threaten them. That will benefit us during our negotiations.”

The empress pondered his suggestion for a while. She then sighed and said: “Forget it. We’ll discuss this again later. There’s nothing else for today. You may all leave.”

“Bang... Bang... Cough! Cough! Cough!”

“Cough, cough! How dare you play with guns in my workshop, you brat! Go outside and test your gun!”

The revolver I created stopped working after firing two shots... No, it’s not because it can’t fire consecutively, but because my nose was overwhelmed with the smell of the smoke in the workshop which was released from my gun after I fired the two shots. The entire room was covered in white smoke. I was choking so bad I was tearing up. The red-haired lady also suffocated; she grabbed me by my arm and threw me out of the shop.

The door of the shop which hadn’t been opened in a long time finally opened, albeit for the sake of getting rid of the suffocating and blinding smoke. I took in big breaths of air. Nah, this won’t work. This black gun powder isn’t suitable for consecutive shots. If I actually fire six shots, I’ll die from smoke inhalation. It looks like I need to create gun powder that doesn’t release smoke...

Even Nier was choking and coughing non-stop. She held her chest with her hands as she gasped for air, and while looking at me with contempt, said: “I don’t know what you invented, but it looks like it’s capable of choking its wielder to death. If you’ve finally thought it through and committed to suiciding, please go into a small room and use it yourself.”

I smiled helplessly as I fanned the gun-smoke and asked: “Would I need to choke myself to death if I used this to kill myself?! Couldn’t I just put a bullet in my head instead?”

Nier looked at me with anticipation and said: “Please go ahead then.”

“I won’t die!!”

I still don’t want to die yet, sorry!

Despite the commotion, the creation of my revolver was very successful. It may not be as compact as a modern one, but it's not a bad revolver. It can fire six shots consecutively, except I won't be able to see anything in front of me afterwards because my vision will be completely covered by white smoke...

Loading the bullets is also extremely difficult. That's just one of the problems with revolvers that you can't do anything about.

"To be honest, you continue to surprise me, prince."

The red-haired lady leaned her back on the wall. She took out a pipe from her pocket, put some tobacco leaves in, and said: "Where did you get that idea from? The elves have never been renowned for their use of machinery. And judging from your handiwork, handling and thought patterns, it's fairly obvious you're an experienced gunsmith. Where did you learn this from in the past? I think that if you were to run a workshop, you'd truly be able to change this world."

"You're flattering me. These are actually ideas I usually come up with, I just never acted on them is all."

I looked at the revolver in my hand and then tucked it into my belt. I then smiled and said: "Before I leave, I have another idea to share. I hope to see this long gun model made."

It was the rifle I wanted to make for Lucia. I don't know why myself, but while I was making this revolver, I wanted to make Lucia a rifle that belonged to her alone as well. I believe that Lucia would be formidable with the gun since she has the assistance of wind elves who could assist with bullet trajectory. She'd probably have a one-hundred percent accuracy rate.

As such, I wanted to make Lucia a rifle with relatively high accuracy.

Rifling isn't a problem since this red-haired lady already knows about it. What came to mind therefore was a rifle with high accuracy and a greater range. And that would be none other than the Sharps rifle that the United States cleverly crafted.

But before I create that sort of rifle, I need to make gunpowder which doesn't release smoke first...

The red-haired lady knocked on her pipe, looked at the street, coughed, and faintly said: “But a war will probably start soon, won’t it?”

I got surprised and asked: “WHY?!”

“Because Federline runs this street. He’s already ordered gunsmiths to begin making artillery. There has also been someone buying Castor coins at the market recently. It’s obvious that something big is about to go down.”

“That fatso owns this street?! He’s a firearms merchant?!”

“Firearms merchant?”

“Someone who sells firearms.”

“He’s involved with everything. He originally was an arms manufacturer. Afterwards, when the empire didn’t need to go to war, he turned his attention to other stuff. But since he’s gone back to manufacturing artillery, it’s an indication that a war is about to start.”

I nodded, and lowered my head to think about it carefully. Kids who grew up in my generation don’t associate any positive adjectives with firearm merchants, because they’re essentially people who incite wars for monetary benefits. But I didn’t hear anything about a war starting... I didn’t know about this as the prince. And when I met that fatso yesterday, I didn’t realise he was a firearms merchant.

“Then why do they need to buy Castor coins? What’s buying Castor coins got to do with waging a war? Oh... Right... After Castor becomes occupied, they won’t need their coins anymore... But... But something like that should’ve been an order passed down from the royal family. I didn’t hear anything about it.”

The red-haired lady waved her hand and said: “It wasn’t someone from the royal family. I haven’t seen the person who’s buying the coins, however, judging by the looks of things, it doesn’t seem like he’s on the same side as that fatso. Also, I don’t think it’s correct to call it ‘buying’. It’s more like converting, as in taking Castor’s coins and then exchanging them for bronze or gold coins.”

Huh? Who’d buy Castor coins? Why would they buy Castor coins? Does that mean that something is going to happen to that currency? Is Castor about to face some sort of problem and they coincidentally happen to be preparing for

war? I just met with the Envoy from Castor yesterday and I didn't hear anything about the two countries relationship becoming tense.

I stood up and asked: "Where's the person who's buying Castor's coins?"

Why would they buy Castor coins if a war is about to break out?

Nothing about this is normal!

"Nier, come with me!"

I want to find out what the problem with Castor's currency is!

Translator Comments: Please read the important message below in the Disqus comments.

Chapter 27

There's definitely a crowd of people at the forefront of the market that can be described as so: They sit in chairs with all sorts of coins in their hands with a scale in front of them. They're not merchants, but they can't be separated from businesses. They're money changers.

The values of the coins differ from place to place. They get the coins from here and then exchange them at places with different exchange rates to earn the difference. The major factors that determine the value of the coins depend on the amount of the respective metal present in the coins as well as whether the country it belongs to is large and powerful or not. The first factor is an intuitive value, the second factor is the degree of faith the citizens have.

Let's say that the empire coins have the greatest credibility. If a country were to perish, its currency would lose all meaning. But at present, the strongest country in the mainland, the Rosvenor Empire's currency is the most stable currency. As such, a lot of people are rushing to exchange the current currency they possess for the empire coins with the empress's face printed on it. Thus, the empire's currency is the most trusted currency for all of humanity, regardless of area or country, as well as being the most stable currency. It's relatively similar to the modern day U.S. dollar.

And hence the currency controversy between Castor and the empire's silver coins.

I sat down in front of a money changer. He looked at me with a smile and asked: "My, my, what currencies would you like to exchange, sir?"

I looked at his small table which had the nine currencies neatly arranged. That indicated that he could exchange those nine currencies with one another. I scanned them and said: "I want to exchange my coins for Castor coins."

“Castor coins did you say? The value of Castor coins have risen recently.”

He rubbed the stubble on his chin, smiled as he took out a small bag with Castor coins, and then said: “To be honest, I’m not too willing to exchange them... I heard the value of Castor’s coins were going to inflate. I’m honestly thinking of stockpiling them.”

I paused and then asked: “Inflate?”

“It’s insider news.” He leaned his body over in a mysterious manner and quietly said: “It’s said that the value of Castor coins will rise. I don’t know what’s going on either, but that’s what everyone is saying.”

I nodded to indicate I understood. There are usually a number of ways the value of a certain currency gets inflated. With the metal coins before me, the most common way is by introducing new coins which contain a greater amount of its respective metal. That way, the value of the coins themselves rise. If these people possess a large number of Castor coins, then they’ll earn the difference. For example, if Castor’s silver coins were originally exchanged for sixteen bronze coins, they can now be exchanged for eighteen bronze coins, thereby earning them two bronze coins.

Increasing the amount of metal in the coins can also influence the credibility of the currency though, regardless of how large and powerful a country may be. At the same time, if your coins contain far too little metal, then its credibility will also suffer. The empire coins and Castor coins are in a race right now. You’re telling me that the value of Castor coins are going to rise before a war breaks out? Are they saying that to increase their competitive edge?

Is this related to the trade war and the war? What I want to know right now is the identity of the person spreading the news that the value of Castor’s currency will rise. Is that factual? If Castor’s currency does in fact rise, then the purpose of spreading the news wouldn’t benefit the person who spread the news in any way shape or form. If Castor’s currency happens to depreciate, he won’t benefit either. So why did he spread this news? Is his aim to gather all of Castor’s coins in one place so that it doesn’t circulate around anymore?

Was that fatso the one that spread the news or was it Castor’s people? The current situation between the two countries is delicate. A war could break out

overnight between them which completely perplexed me.

“Thank you.”

I threw down two silver Castor coins. To be honest, that was too generous of me, but it's not my money, so who cares? It's not even the empress's money. I don't even know who's giving me money every day, but I'm happy to spend it.

Nier, following behind me was confused and asked: “Your majesty, what exactly are you doing?”

I paused and then replied: “It's a bit tough to explain because it's an economics issue after all... It'd somewhat make sense if it were someone from our side collecting Castor coins, but if somebody from Castor was collecting Castor coins, then I don't understand their purpose myself. This person is collecting Castor coins while he conceals himself. This isn't something the government of either country came up with. In other words, somebody is plotting something.”

“Will a war break out?”

“I don't know. I'll need to ask her majesty when I get back. I'm not sure... But it makes no sense for their envoy to be attending a ball if a war is about to break out.”

“Why are you so worked up, your majesty? This clearly has nothing to do with you.”

“I don't want a war!”

I turned around, looked at Nier and said: “War should be avoided if it can be helped. How can I sit and watch a war break out as the prince of the country?”

Confused, Nier shook her head and said: “Isn't war a glorious thing to you, your majesty? War is just like another meal or another sleep for us. Our empire became the strongest through war. Her majesty is the ruler of this world. War is but just an event to get rid of those barbarians. War is our means of achieving glory and respect. Why is war such a bad thing to you, your majesty?”

“No! No! You should never wish for war!” I looked at Nier and continued sternly: “Unavoidable wars are one thing, but recklessly waging a war is

another. How many people lose their lives in wars? What about the parents and children of fallen soldiers? Regardless of what the circumstances are, war is the worst solution. You shouldn't kill if you can help it, and you should avoid war where it's avoidable..."

"Weakling."

Nier cut me off before I finished. Her eyes were colder than any I'd seen before and she looked at me with more disdain than ever. She said: "The most glorious thing to a soldier is sacrificing himself for his emperor. A soldier is never to be concerned over his life because he's dying for the emperor. It's a great privilege and honour. Yet you as the emperor refuse to give the soldiers a chance. You're not worthy of being an emperor!"

"I'm not an emperor to begin with!!"

I felt as though I had no way of communicating with Nier... Our viewpoints, philosophies and values completely contradict each other... For Chinese people, the pain and sorrows of war are too much of a burden. We aren't afraid to sacrifice ourselves, but that's when enemies rock up on our doorstep. We love peace, but we're not afraid of war.

But why are the people here so enthusiastic?! You people are definitely not farmers! You people must've been nomads or pirates in the past! Why do you people crave war so much?!

"The empire that exists right now wouldn't exist if it weren't for war. Your rejection of war is also a direct rejection of her majesty! Weak people can't become emperors. I thought that you would be like her majesty and stand at the forefront with us. I never expected you to be a coward who's afraid of death and hides at the back!"

"The desire for war will become the downfall of the empire! The empire isn't trying to expand right now so there's no need for another war. Is sacrificing people fun to you?! Did you consider the suffering of those who are left behind after someone dies?!"

"I am a Valkyrie! I have no family! I belong to her majesty!"

Nier looked at me as though she was ready to draw her sword and slash me to

death. This was the first time I got really angry too. I have no way of communicating with someone like this. Is it fun to throw the people into a cesspool of misery and suffering? Is it fun to have people kill each other and die? I died once slaying Earth Dragons. Was that fun? Are those things you enjoy repeating over and over?

“Forget it. Go back, Nier. This is an order. Don’t follow me again.”

I sat myself down on a wooden chair by the road, looked at Nier and waved my hand.

Nier pressed her hand on her sword handle and went silent. She didn’t insist on following me this time. She turned around and left instead.

I raised my head and watched Nier’s back. Her white cape swayed left-and-right as she moved. The little cloth pouch she attached to her belt bounced up and down.

Forget it.

I need to check things out, regardless of whether a war breaks out or not. What sort of conspiracy is taking place behind the scenes? The matter with humanity isn’t so simple. Behind every action taken by humans lies a conspiracy.

Chapter 28

“Huh? You want to know who mentioned it? Everybody is talking about it man. Hence why I’m doing this.”

“N-No... I meant, who told you? Or who did you ask?”

“I went and asked Henry next door...”

“Got it. Thank you.”

“You’re Henry, right? Umm... I wanted to ask you, from where did you here that the value of Castor’s currency was going to rise?”

“I heard it at a restaurant. That’s what the restaurant owner said.”

.....

I panted slightly as I looked at the huge courtyard before me. I backtracked and pretty much ran through every street of every suburb, asking everybody who knew about it. In the end, all the clues I gathered pointed towards this particular trading company. Basically, all the news claiming that the value of Castor’s currency would rise was mentioned by a particular merchant from this trading company.

Everything else aside, I was exhausted. These boots aren’t remotely suitable for getting around in a rush, so why do so many people wear them?!

Trading companies are essentially alliances people create to improve their prominence and with it, their benefits. This in turn reduces bickering between merchants and companies, and the cooperation means that they have support. I don’t know if the claim that Castor’s currency would rise in value was a business tactic of the company or an individual act of a merchant. If it’s the former, then I want to know if they have some sort of relationship with Castor.

I looked at the door and felt that it was probably best to not alert them by

asking about the currency matter. That said, I still have to investigate the matter. I checked out the logo of the company. They used a horse carriage for their logo... Hmm... I keep feeling like I've seen it somewhere before. I couldn't recall where I saw it after thinking about it for a while. But I honestly feel that I've seen it somewhere before. The elves have granted me very keen senses. However, my brain capacity as a human limits me from remembering everything my senses pick up...

I knocked on the door and the door to the courtyard opened. Two people rushed over to greet me and then ran back. Inside the courtyard, I could hear people shouting and horses neighing. The centre of the courtyard was filled with wooden boxes. Some were open. Inside were boxes of apples, milk, nails, wheat, salt... It was just a scrambled collection of everything.

People inside the company were shouting orders to move things or split up material delegations, so there was no one to bother with me. I fumbled through their goods to see if I could find any problems. If they were Castor merchants, then their goods must be connected to Castor. Such goods could be for example, fish, things you'd normally come across.

Nothing I found indicated that the goods were somehow connected with Castor...

"Are you looking to buy something?"

"Ah... No..."

I looked at a guy who came running over with books in his hand. He waved his hand, looked at me, and then asked: "Then are you here to bring in goods or are you from another shop?"

"Umm... Neither... I just want to know... Mmm... Where do you guys deliver to?"

"We deliver to many places. We deliver to the mountains in the North, the elves border, the desert in the West, and the plains in the South." He looked at me with a frown and asked: "You are here for...?"

I was put on the spot. It's best I don't bring up the matter about Castor's currency. If I alert the one responsible, they'll become more cautious, making it

even more difficult to investigate. I hesitated for a moment and then asked: “Do you people have sea goods then? Like eel or fish and the sort...?”

He shook his head and then replied: “Unfortunately, we don’t deliver to Castor. You should try your luck somewhere else. We, Six Horse Carriages don’t do sea travel. I suggest you check out the sailing boat trading company... But before you leave, check out our stock. If you want to run a shop, you’ll need good building materials... Our nails are made by ironsmiths from the desert. I guarantee...”

“Sorry... Sorry...”

After I rejected his offer, I left the “Six Horse Carriages” company and sighed. There’s no reliable information here. I only managed to prove that the company wasn’t connected to Castor. So then why would a company not connected to Castor make that claim?

There’s definitely some connection. I just can’t figure it out... So what do I need to do now to investigate...?

I raised my head up to look at the sky. It was getting dark. I spent the entire day outside chasing up clues I had today, and I haven’t got much after an entire day... Looks like I’ll have to spend another day investigating the matter if I want to get to the bottom of this. I’ll go pay Castell a visit tonight when I get back. Castell should be a merchant, right...?

What about Nier...?

I sighed. Nier isn’t easy to comfort. You can’t smooth things over with her with a bouquet of flowers, a ring or a meal... I reckon she’d be moved to tears if I get her majesty to hug her. But are you asking me to go back to the empress and ask: “Mom, my bodyguard is ignoring me, can you please give her a hug?”

What the hell is that bullshit?!

“Your majesty!!”

As I was slowly walking somebody shouted loudly from my side. I turned to see the boss I bought eel from yesterday kneeling on the ground... How did I end up here again...? I nodded and said: “Please rise.”

“What are you doing here, your majesty?”

“Oh... I’m heading back... The eel you served me yesterday tasted great.”

He wore a scrunched up smile that made it difficult to discern his facial features. He rubbed his hands and elatedly said: “Please come by anytime if you wish to have some again. Please come by anytime. How about I give you a dish now?”

I looked at his carriage before him and noticed he was about half-done with packing up, so I said: “It’s fine. Do you take your stuff with you every time you head home?”

“No, no. This barrel belongs to the trade company. I have eel in here...”

I casually glanced at the barrel. I looked at the eel inside the bucket and...

Wait!!!

I was shocked. I suddenly recalled where I saw that carriage logo. In order to prevent mixing up barrels, trade companies mark their barrels with a small logo. Normally, people don’t notice it, and it’s also inside. But in order to fit a few more barrels, the barrel was placed sideways right now so I could see the bottom of the barrel with one glance. And there I noticed that small logo!

I saw it through the water yesterday!

This is the fish the six horse carriages trade company sold!!

“Unfortunately, we don’t deliver to Castor.”

Bullshit!

They lied. Clearly they ship eel and this sort of fish, but they claimed otherwise. They come from Castor and they’re the ones spreading the news the Castor’s currency will rise in value. There’s definitely a problem. Both Castor and their currency have problems. The same goes for that trade company. I must carefully investigate that trade company!

Luna, who was cleaning the staircase handrails by the entrance smiled, bowed and said: “Welcome back, your majesty.”

“Uhm.”

I nodded nonchalantly and then called for a messenger. I wrote a fairly rough note and gave it to him. I then said to Luna: “Luna, tell the kitchen staff to prepare food and wine for two people. I want to eat in the dining hall tonight.”

“Ah... Understood.”

“Castell! I feel that the formal clothing faction are too much! On one hand they want peace, while on the other, they’re asking for war. It’s our army and yet they keep trying to take control of it! That’s a bit much, don’t you agree?! That applies particularly to that fatso. He dared to point at me and act out before me. Doesn’t everybody know he wants to buy army materials?!”

Castell laughed, and stretched his hand out to stop Kurt from continuing. The two of them were walking in a corridor in the palace. Kurt’s face was red and showed that he was frustrated. Castell, on the other hand, was as calm as usual. Castell turned around, looked at him, smiled and said: “General Kurt, it is pointless for you to bring this up with me. Do you think that I can get Mr Federline to ease up?”

“You’re her majesty’s favoured retainer! There isn’t a problem with waging a war, but please don’t let the reason for us heading out to war be because of those from the formal wear faction!”

“That has nothing to do with me. I cannot possibly change her majesty’s decisions. Her majesty has yet to pass down an order anyway. I am more concerned about his majesty.”

“His majesty? Wasn’t he not going to get involved?”

“No, he has already taken action. His majesty is also very sharp. He has discovered the most important key.”

Castell watched the messenger rush over. He smiled slightly and softly said: “It is his majesty’s messenger. This must mean his majesty has understood....”

Chapter 29

Extra Chapter

Luna stood to one side after she set my napkin for me. Castell sat on my right hand side and asked me with a smile: “Your majesty, for what reason have you gone out of your way to invite me to dinner at the outer chamber?”

I raised my wine glass and said: “To her majesty.”

“To her majesty.”

Castell couldn't speak while we were paying our respects to her majesty so he had to take a drink even if he did have a question. If you wanted to poison somebody, that drink would be the best opportunity, because according to the rules, you can't reject a drink dedicated to showing respect to her majesty. But of course, poisoning a drink that's supposed to be used to pay respect to her majesty will result in the death penalty.

We had our first drink. I didn't have any thoughts about poisoning Castell. I placed my glass down, looked at Castell and said: “Castell, I want to ask you a few questions. Answer me honestly.”

Castell smiled and asked me back: “When have I ever lied to you?”

Indeed, Castell has never lied to me since hiding a fact doesn't count as lying. I paused for a moment and then asked: “Castell, do you have any information on Federline and Andre?”

Castell smiled and pursed his lips with red wine on them. He looked at me and faintly asked: “Your majesty, I do not quite understand what you mean. Are you asking about their men or them themselves?”

Castell isn't a bad guy, but his love for playing word-games with people is annoying as can be. Do I need to be explicit with everything? Won't her majesty

kill you with a kick if you behave like this? You want me to lay it bare for you? You're knocking on hell's door.

"Them?"

"Yes, your majesty." Castell smiled slightly and then continued: "Humans will forever be social animals, especially within this large palace. Humans are the cruellest creatures. They enjoy their wine as they kill. They embrace you as they hurt you. They even beautify it with the word 'fate'. To protect themselves and gain more power, they find people who share their visions and goals, and ally themselves. That is how the conference chamber is made up."

"And they're separated as factions or parties? So you're saying Federline and Andre belong to two factions?"

"That is correct. The merchants team up with other merchants to become the pigeons taking the food, while soldiers team up with soldiers to become the eagle which overlooks things. That is how it goes, your majesty. They sought you out to increase their political power. You must have noticed that neither side has made a suggestion which her majesty has been satisfied with regarding the matter with Castor."

Castell looked at me, smiled like a merchant and continued: "For the generals, fighting Castor is the best option for them to win favour with her majesty since Castor is but just a city. There is no way they cannot bring down their city gates with heavy artillery. However, for the merchants, it would be easier for them to do business there if there was no blood shed... However..."

I looked at Castell and softly said: "Arms dealers."

Castell nodded and said: "That is correct. There are arms dealers among the merchants. They do not necessarily wish for war, but they seek conflict. There does not need to be a war, they simply need to increase the tension at the borders. But there are those in the army that understand that war is not the best option. They want to maintain the existence of a complete city."

"I get it now."

In short, there's a radicalism party and a conservative party. The radicalism party views the army as their stronghold. They rely on military accomplishments

to prove themselves. The conservative party on the other hand, are satisfied with the status quo.

I looked at Castell's hypocritical smile, paused for a moment and said: "So which party are you with, Castell?"

Castell earnestly replied: "I belong to the empress party."

"The empress party?"

You boot-licking slave...

I grinned and then raised my wine-glass. I now understand the political situation of both parties, but I still don't know if the rumour that a war is going to break out is true or not. According to what Castell said, the arms dealer doesn't actually want a war. He just wants tension. With tension comes orders for arms. So is a going war start or not?

"What has her majesty got to say?"

"Her majesty is your mother. It is better for you to go ask her instead of myself."

True...

And now for the most important question.

I handed Castell a Castor coin. Castell looked at it, then laughed and asked: "Is this not a Castor coin? What point are you trying to make, your majesty?"

"I want to ask if you know about the value of Castor's currency rising."

"I know that there are people spreading the news to make money."

"What do you think about it?"

"I only received a Castor coin from their envoy and that is all."

Castell handed me a Castor coin which was exactly the same. Had I not seen him take another one out, I would've gotten the two mixed up. I picked up both coins and checked them out. No matter how I looked at them, they were identical. From their weight, the way they felt, their jagged spots, the print, there was no difference.

"So what do you think?"

“Here is what I think, your majesty.”

Castell didn't answer me directly. Instead, he smiled and said: “I may run a trading company, but the company itself belongs to the royal family. I do not know what changes have occurred with Castor's coins. However, I would like to ask you a question, your majesty. Between Castor's envoy and I, who do you feel dresses more befitting of an envoy?”

“You.”

That I can say without hesitation.

“No, no, no. I did not mean us as people. I did not express myself clearly there.” Castell went on to rephrase it. In the swaying of the candle lights, his face was half hidden by the shadows like an undertaker paying a visit. He looked at me and said with a smile: “I was referring to how we are dressed.”

“What's the difference?”

“You are not an envoy, so perhaps you are unaware, but as envoys, we must dress extravagantly when in another country as an envoy. No, it is not a corrupt custom to dress as such during such times. It is about dignity. It is a representation of their country's dignity. Only strong and wealthy countries have people who dress extravagantly and eat well. Seeing an envoy dressed extravagantly tells the ruler of the host country that the country the envoy hails from is powerful and respectable. An envoy is thereby essentially the billboard of a country. It is practically impossible to be over-extravagant.”

Castell smiled and nodded. He then touched his smooth chin, picked up his glass of wine and said: “Your majesty, please do not let my presence ruin your wine. How about we end tonight's matters here? I am struggling to resist helping myself to the feast you have prepared for me. Please allow me to wish you good health with this glass. Long live her majesty.”

“Long live her majesty.”

Castell never makes his point explicit when he speaks. Is he trying to protect himself or test me? I raised my wine-glass and finished my glass in one go. I'm not sure if it's because I've become accustomed to it or what, but I could taste red wine this time. Luna walked up to me and politely refilled my glass. She

then walked back to stand inside the shadows. Castell looked at her, laughed and said: "Is she the maid you purchased, your majesty?"

"That's right, your people tried to fight me for her."

"I am very sorry."

Castell smiled and bowed. He then raised his head and said: "Your majesty, please always be attentive of your surroundings. Everybody is after you because of your value as the prince. However, if you dig too deep, you will be in danger."

I looked at Castell and asked: "Will you protect me?"

Castell smiled casually and replied: "No, I will not protect you."

Bonus: Here's some new official artwork. This piece is called "Troy's night with Elizabeth"



Chapter 30

Luna who was following me upstairs quietly said: “Miss Gilliante has yet to return today...”

I silently tugged on my garment that can't be penetrated by blades and softly said: “I ordered her to not follow me. She might never come over again.”

“I see.”

Luna felt awkward and lowered her head as she slowly walked behind me. She was dressed in her black and white maid uniform. She used a cloth to cover her elf ears. She usually busies herself at the outer court, and then she turns in at night with Nier in her little room. I don't know what the two of them talk about in there, but judging from Nier's personality, I don't think she'd say anything.

“So what will be of your safety then, your majesty?”

“I won't be in danger.”

She lowered her head and softly muttered: “No, I... No, I mean... I, your humble servant do not think that will be the case.” Elves don't use that many formalities in their speech, so as an elf, she was unaccustomed to the formal way humans spoke. Castell and others who belong to noble families can refer to themselves as “I”. However, servants like Luna have to refer to themselves as “your humble servant”.*

The Valkyries may have tragic backgrounds, but as the ruler's bodyguards, they are allowed to refer to themselves as “I”. The captain can use a less formal version of “I.”

I turned around, scrubbed her head, smiled and said: “It's alright. You don't have to worry about me.”

“You don't have to bother with the formalities of referring to yourself in a

particular way with me. I'm an elf too... I mean, a mixed-blood. Just refer to me the way you would as an elf."

She bowed her head to thank me and said: "Understood. Thank you, your majesty."

After making several turns we arrived in front of my room. Someone dressed in white knelt silently by the door. She had her head lowered as she looked towards the room. She had her sword placed to one side and her two hands on her knees. She was leaning over in an apologetic pose very characteristic of Asian cultures while facing my room. I rubbed my eyes.

My eyes aren't playing tricks on me, are they? That should be Nier, right?

"Nier?"

I didn't quite understand what was going on but walked up to her anyway. I supported her shoulder and she raised her head to look at me. I noticed that the left side of her face was swollen as well as traces of blood below her nose and her lips. I froze up for a moment, and then reached my hand out to gently wipe the blood off her face. I took a deep breath and asked: "What's wrong? Who hit you?"

"I sincerely apologise, your majesty. I angered you this afternoon. I will accept any punishment you have for me, but please do not get rid of me."

Nier prostrated herself and bowed her head to the floor before my feet. The fearless Nier I knew was trembling before me. Her voice was trembling with fear. She continued to tremble as she begged me: "I beg you... I beg you... Don't kick me out.... Her majesty... Her majesty said that she'd kick me out of the Valkyrie squad if you kick me out... I... I... I don't want to leave her majesty.... I... I don't have anywhere I can go if I leave the Valkyrie squad.... So... So I beg you, please don't kick me out...."

I helped Nier up. Nier's tears were flowing out uncontrollably from her emerald eyes. Her tears rolled down the left side of her face where it was swollen. Her body was quaking with fear. She gripped my leg tightly as she begged me. I never saw her so afraid before, but I did know the reason why.

I turned around and took the winter cloak Luna was holding in her hand. I

sighed and said: “Get up, Nier. Come with me.”

“Understood... Where do you want to go?”

“The inner court. Come see her majesty with me.”

Ten minutes later at the inner court.

The empress restlessly threw down her pen. She drew something indiscernible on the sheet of paper. She massaged her temples and asked the Valkyrie who entered a question.

The Valkyrie replied with an awkward look on her face: “Umm... Umm...”

“Stop stuttering, and out with it already. If someone trespasses into the inner court, just kill them and be done with it. A mess like this is so unseemly!”

The empress whipped her hand, stood up, walked up to the bed and aggressively pulled the curtains open.

“Umm... It.... It is his majesty... We had a bit of a run-in with him.... He seemed really angry and asked to come in.... We told him you were already resting but he insisted on coming in. He even attacked the Valkyries...”

“WHAT?!”

The empress threw her pen at the face of the Valkyrie, walked over with big strides, grabbed her collar and shouted: “Where did you get the gall from?! Are you revolting against me?! The prince is my son. A son is being stopped at the door and prevented from seeing his mother?! Allow the prince to come and leave as he pleases from now. There’s no need to report to me. Are you all blind?! I wondered why the prince never came to the inner court. Turns out it was all because of you lot! If you dare to hurt the prince, I’ll personally kill you all one by one! Let the prince in! All of you come over here and kneel!”

“Right away!!”

The Valkyrie ran outside quivering. She wiped her sweat on her forehead and ran outside even though her legs were so weak she was struggling to stay on them. Whenever her majesty gets that angry, it’s like the entire room is set on fire. The anger of a sovereign really can kill everybody within a thousand mile radius. She’d probably be headless right now if she did something to the prince.

I looked at the Valkyrie before me coldly and returned the gun in my hand to my belt. The Valkyries watched me vigilantly and placed their drawn swords against my neck. I glared at them and asked: “Her majesty must’ve heard the gunshot before. Would you believe me if I told you that you’ll all be doomed if your swords scratch me?”

“The inner court...”

“Of course I know it’s her majesty’s resting place. That’s why I came here!”

I took two steps forward and the swords on my neck followed suit. I really must praise the Valkyries’ skills. They’re keeping their swords against my neck and staying in rhythm with each step I take. I don’t feel anything on my neck. They looked at each other and not one of them dared to make a move.

Nier had her head down as she followed behind me. She didn’t have her sword drawn. She was more like bystander as she stood behind me.

“Her majesty has orders! His majesty may enter and leave the inner court as he pleases from now on. There is no need to report it! Withdraw your swords! Her majesty called for all of us!!”

I took in a deep breath and watched the blades pull away from my neck in a quick moment. Last time I almost cried myself out of fear, but there’s something more important this time. I’m scared of her majesty killing me, but I don’t want to see Nier’s tears.

The empress walked out in the same military gear she wore during the day. She pat her face and then waved her hands. The Valkyries all knelt down at her motion. The empress looked at me and asked with a smile: “You don’t have to come in anymore. What are you looking for me for so late at night, son?”

I looked at the empress and felt my hands shake. I’m scared, but right now... No, when I saw Nier’s tears, I couldn’t suppress my anger. Perhaps it had to do with me drinking three glasses of red wine. But I felt angry as though somebody had destroyed something of mine.

But when I came face to face with the empress, I got scared again. I felt my entire body shaking. I didn’t know why either. The empress was clearly smiling gently, but why was I shaking instinctively? Was it because I wanted to flee? Is

this... Is this a reaction from the memories of the original owner of this body?

“I know. I understand the mistake of the Valkyries. They’re all good girls. It’s just that they’re too rigid. The bodyguard unit caused you quite a bit of trouble, didn’t they? So... Elisa, off yourself.”

“Understood!”

“Wait...”

Just as I spoke out, and before I could reach my hand out, a young girl on the empress’s left hand side resolutely drew her sword and stabbed it through her heart.

I watched as blood spurt forth before the empress. The sword pierced right through her body. The young girl’s body jerked a few times. The last thing she did was look at the blood in front of the empress, reach her quivering hand out and fall before the empress, covering the blood stain with her body...

“Did you see that, son?”

The empress looked at me and smiled gently. She flipped the young girl’s corpse over with her foot. The girl wore a satisfied smile on her face. The empress looked back at me and quietly said: “You are the future emperor. You are their master. You are the emperor. If somebody disobeys you, just order them to kill themselves and it will be settled. The same goes with Nier. Nier disobeyed you today, so you have all the rights to make her kill herself. Nier, have you apologised to the prince yet?”

I quivered as I responded: “Yes... Nier has apologised...”

“Do you have any other requests then, son?”

The empress reached her hand out as she looked at me with a smile.

“I... I... I want... No, nothing....”

Glossary

*It’s the whole business with craploads of ways to refer to yourself as “I” in Chinese. That’s as close as I can think of. I won’t keep up with that and just use “I”, because it’s a nuisance, and you already get the point.

Chapter 31

I want to stop this war.

This was the first time I had such a clear vision of what I wanted.

The red-haired lady knocked on my head with a gun barrel, and with a small wooden stick in her mouth said: “Don’t disparage Elizabeth in my workshop... If somebody finds out, both you and I may lose our heads.”

While she did say that, I didn’t feel like she was worried. She probably just said that because Nier was present. I originally intended to explain what happened to her majesty last night, but I ended up getting frightened by her instead. That was the first time I felt afraid of power. I also came to the realisation that perhaps I can’t change Nier.

The young girls were willing to die with just a word from her majesty. They didn’t die for their own ideals or dreams, or some sort of lofty goal. The young girls were willing to pierce their heart with their sword simply because they were told to. I’ve never witnessed such an era and therefore have no way of comprehending the way they think.

I really don’t get it. Can such an empire last long? When I posed the question to the red-haired lady cleverly, she knocked on my head.

“If you ask me whether Elizabeth is a good ruler, I’d honestly say ‘yes’. You can tell by looking at the citizens. As long as they stay in line, they get to go on with their lives. Their income isn’t low either. They don’t even get taxed one-twelfth of their earnings, and neither do they have to deal with mandatory military service. Merchants aren’t restricted by what goods they decide to sell. There are no restrictions on scholars, poets or mathematicians etcetera either. Government decrees are also very reasonable, which is why the people wholeheartedly and voluntarily obey Elizabeth.”

“Then...”

“Killing people is Elizabeth’s personal hobby. Elizabeth may kill but she never kills indiscriminately. It’s just that she’s extremely sensitive about imperial power. She interprets disobedience and indecorous behaviour as mutiny and will kill those that do so.”

The red-haired lady looked at the rifling, and then looked at me and said: “Elizabeth does kill a fair bit, but she is a wise and able ruler. She commands people very intelligently. She kills and conquers because of her past. Prince, do you know how she raised an army? Back then, the imperial capital was just a mere city. Your grandfather, Elizabeth’s father was very fervent. He was very kind to the barbarians around. When a famine struck, he welcomed the barbarians with open arms. Those barbarians repaid him by storming the royal palace, decapitating him, and throwing his head down before Elizabeth. They then filled it up with wine and forced her to drink it. If she disobeyed, they were going to have her bare their children. Elizabeth was therefore forced to drink that wine mixed with her father’s blood out of his head.”

Seeing my shocked face, she laughed out loud and said: “Do you know what happened after? The barbarians vanished and nobody saw them again, because Elizabeth killed anybody that was blood-related to them. At that time, Elizabeth sold her palace, and her clothes for funds to train an army. After she slaughtered all the barbarians, she used the head of their leader, filled it with wine – so it was a drink mixed with brain-parts and blood, and Elizabeth drank two skulls of blood-wine. Do you think she’s a benevolent ruler?”

“Still, she can’t...”

“You didn’t witness Elizabeth’s past. She was much more extreme in the past. She drank blood in the past, you know? She could only drink wine if there was blood mixed in there. During that time, the blood of young girls was prepared specifically for her. She also brought her sword with her to the conference chamber during that time. And if somebody did so much as sneeze, their head would be flying the next moment.”

The red-haired lady shrugged as though it was “whatever”, and then attached the barrel and firing device together. She then looked at me and continued: “It

was only after she had you that she became less violent. Although you can't say she's benevolent right now, she at least doesn't kill indiscriminately anymore. Elizabeth's heart became distorted long ago. If a war truly breaks out, I don't think Castor will have many survivors."

"Didn't you say she doesn't kill indiscriminately?"

"Yeah, she doesn't. But you can't put up a resistance. If you put up a resistance against her forces, then you're an enemy. If that's the case, Elizabeth will definitely kill you. Her father was killed because of his benevolence and because he was an approachable individual. Do you think she'd go and develop a close relationship with somebody? Elizabeth is a wise ruler, but she's also destined to be a tyrant. Prince, what sort of emperor do you aim to become? Forgive me for being blunt, but if you intend to become a benevolent emperor, then I don't think you should return here to humanity."

"But..."

"No buts. An emperor who doesn't kill will be killed. No benevolent emperor ever met a good end. There's always somebody eyeing the power of royalty, and the only thing that can make them give up is dominance. Your majesty, a throne soaked in blood may feel uncomfortable to sit on, but it'll allow you to sit on your throne for a little longer."

I silently took my long rifle she handed me. This is basically the beta version of the rifle I was making for Lucia. I can create guns here at this workshop without worry as this red-haired lady doesn't sell these things or have any thoughts of producing them. She's just purely interested in these things. I can tell. She doesn't serve any customers and doesn't create any weapons... But what I'm curious about is why nobody messes with her.

"Come to your senses, prince. You're the future emperor."

She reached her hand out and scrubbed my head roughly. She smiled and said: "Your kindness is a great gift the gods gifted you, but you require the strength to protect your kindness. Elizabeth is called the Empress of Conquest. So what about you, prince? What do you want to be called in future? The Benevolent Emperor? Or The Last Emperor?"

I looked at her, paused for a bit, took out two Castor silver coins and said: "I

don't want a war, nor do I want to slaughter lots of people. I don't believe that there is someone who'd kill me. Conquest can get people to surrender to you, but only benevolence can get people to sincerely submit and respect you. If it were me... I wouldn't send people off to die on a whim."

"You're not fit to be an emperor then. You should go and be the king of elves."

The red-haired lady struck me with her blunt words and then walked up to the door. She took a smoke, slowly blew out the smoke and said: "Did you say Elizabeth was wrong? She's not wrong. It was fate that caused her to turn out this way. If it weren't for that incident, Elizabeth would still be a bright girl, so don't go thinking that Elizabeth is wrong. She turned out the way she is now because she did the right thing. Now, what did you want me to do by giving me these two coins?"

"I want to examine what the difference between these two coins is. Please let me use your workshop."

"What exactly are you trying to do, prince?"

I took in a deep breath and said: "I don't want a war to break out. I didn't want to bother with it before, but I do now. I won't let the empress go and attack Castor. Yes, I don't know the people there. Yes, the people there aren't related to me in any capacity, but the people that are dying are right before me. I'm weak. I don't have the guts to kill people and I don't want to witness war. But... But because of that, I'm going to give it my best to prevent people from killing each other and a world of bloodshed..."

What Castell said reminded me that an envoy dresses extravagantly as he is the billboard of his country, and yet the envoy from Castor I met had different buttons on the sleeves of his shirt. You can't seriously tell me that an envoy from another country has to fix his clothes by sewing and handiwork. That suggests that Castor's financial power isn't as great as imagined. That means that the likelihood of them retrieving their coins and re-moulding them to raise the value of their coins is very low.

It also means that there should be something different in the mould of the new coins.

I know what I'm going to do might cause Castor to go bankrupt like this, but if they do go bankrupt, that'll prevent her majesty from slaughtering them.

I've already lost what exactly I'm trying to do... I've never been an emperor and I've never received the royal family's education. I'm just a normal person. I have no idea what attitude I should face this world I'm living in right now with. I naively thought I became accustomed to this world only to find out I haven't. I just can't understand it.

Ever since coming here, I've truly come to the realisation that my courage and kindness doesn't work here.

I can't approach people here using my previous ways of thinking.

Author's Note: I believe that a lot of readers will feel the main protagonist is a very contradictory character and weak. But can you imagine what it's like for him? He's just a normal person. He wasn't even a qualified soldier. He was just a technician. He's innately kind, so he managed to live happily among the elves who were just as kind. But his kindness is incompatible with the humans who want to conquer and rule. How could he suddenly turn bloodthirsty and violent when he hasn't lived in this sort of world before? And as such, how would he have the guts to butt heads with the empress upfront? The humans here are shady while he is the only kind existence there. The main protagonist's growth happens step-by-step. He's not weak. He didn't retreat a single step as he watched the Earth Dragons charge towards him, so it's clear that he's not weak. However, there needs to be a reason for him to stand up. He grows one step at a time. He's definitely not a tyrant like Elizabeth, but neither is he a wussy.

Translator Comments: Check comments below for my important announcement.

Chapter 32

“Nier.”

“.....”

Nier stood up from among the group of kids, watched me walk over, bowed and asked: “Do you have orders, your majesty?”

I looked at the side of her face that was still swollen. She started to look a bit livelier. A moment later, I smiled as I shook my head and said: “No, nothing. But after we get back, I’ll rub some of the elves’ spring water on your face for you.”

Nier looked at me and asked: “Why?”

“It hurts, doesn’t it?” I looked at her eyes and sighed. I felt slightly dispirited, lowered my head and softly said: “Sorry... I originally wanted to get her majesty to apologise to you, but... I didn’t have the courage in the end...”

Nier aggressively drew her sword which frightened me and I retreated one step. Nier looked at me and coldly said “Her majesty is never wrong. I was punished because I made a mistake. This is her majesty’s reward. Your majesty, no one is to speak ill of her majesty, even if it’s you. Her majesty is never wrong!”

“But! But you left me because I gave you the order to! You just followed my orders, so you’re not at fault!”

“That still doesn’t mean her majesty is wrong! Her majesty is never wrong! Those who claim that she is wrong are all traitors and rebels. I can’t allow anyone to malign her majesty, even if it’s you! Your majesty, my sword can penetrate your throat. Please do not think that our relationship has eased up by any means.” Nier’s sword was very steady. She looked at me expressionless and had the tip of her sword at my throat. I raised my hands in surrender and I could see my terrified look in the reflection of her sword.

Nier hasn't changed a bit. I thought she'd accepted me after I stood up for her last night, but her loyalty was still devoted to her majesty, and she hasn't eased up towards me in the least.

Nier is the same as those Valkyries, isn't she? If her majesty were to tell her to kill herself, she'd probably kill herself without hesitation. Nier is a Valkyrie, but when I see her reveal her smile when she's with kids, I feel that she's just a normal young girl.

A young girl ran over and tightly hugged Nier's leg, looked at Nier fearfully and exclaimed: "Big sis!! Don't fight with each other!"

Nier lowered her head to look at her, then at me and finally sheathed her sword. She then crouched down and pacified the young girl. She didn't look at me again. Her white cape was facing me who was determined and lonely.

This is a form of blind loyalty, isn't it? It's also a form of fanaticism.

Seeing her loyalty pains me. If Nier were a normal girl, if she were an elf, she would be a warrior in the imperial guard unit. She'd probably play around freely during breaks and go on dates with the man she loved, have kids, leave the imperial guard unit and live the rest of her life peacefully.

But unfortunately, she's a Valkyrie. The empress is her everything. She can't have her own feelings and her own love. She likes children but can't even buy candy for them. Her life could end at the wave of the hand or a word from the empress.

Is she happy?

For the current Nier before me right now, being able to serve the empress must be her idea of bliss. She's afraid of leaving the Valkyrie squad and the empress. If she left the empress, she'd suffer a break down, because in her world right now, the empress is her world. If... If I showed her a different world, would she realise something?

I helplessly smiled. Nah, forget it. Nier would never spare a look for a different world. I'm already satisfied that she doesn't kill indiscriminately under my orders. As for the future, I really don't know when I'll be able to lift her sense of loyalty. When will I be able to become an existence more important to her than

her majesty?

Ah, scratch it.

I turned around and returned to the workshop. The red-haired lady hit the two coins lightly with a small hammer. When she saw me come back in, she said: "I've got good news and bad news, which do you want to hear?"

"The good news?"

"The good news is that these two coins are indeed different. Their exteriors look the same, but you can tell that they're different once you hit them with a hammer. However, I'm not quite sure what's different about them."

"You've told me the bad news as well."

I chuckled and picked up the two coins. I then placed them on the table instead of hitting them with the hammer. Since I can't figure out anything using physics, let's use some chemistry to reveal the truth then. In my memory, the closest thing to silver is cupronickel. Cupronickel is commonly mixed with silver goods. However, in this era there shouldn't be any records of the two being mixed yet. Chemistry exists here, but it's not advanced and hasn't become a system. I'm too lazy to write up the periodic table, so I'll leave it in the hands of the next generation.

Nitric acid does exist though. I just created a reagent of nitric acid and a bunch of other chemicals to create smoke-less gun powder, and finally got rid of the side-effect of choking from released gun powder.

I picked up the concentrated hydrochloric acid bottle and carefully placed drips on them drip by drip... I can't imagine life without pipettes... As I expected, one of the coins soon showed a layer of deposits.

This is a silver coin, while the other didn't have anything.

This is bronze.

I turned to the red-haired lady and asked: "Does Castor manufacture cupronickel...?"

"Cupronickel? What's that? Oh... you mean white-coloured bronze? That's really cheap stuff. There are natural mines containing it in foreign countries,

and it's also manufactured in the East. It's not considered valuable or expensive anywhere. Huh? Are you saying that this isn't a silver coin but a bronze coin?" The red-haired lady was surprised as she picked up the silver coin without any deposit on it and scanned it.

I nodded and said: "That's right. This is no longer a silver coin, but a bronze coin. To be honest, it's not easy to make a silver coin out of cupronickel and get the weight so close. If cupronickel were indeed a valuable metal, then it means that the value of Castor's currency will indeed rise. But since cupronickel isn't valuable, it means that the value of Castor's currency will depreciate."

"What does that prove?"

"Isn't there a rumour that the value of Castor's coins would be rising in price going around? That's why a lot of people are collecting Castor coins and the number of Castor coins circulating on the market is decreasing. If their currency doesn't rise in value and depreciates, then there'll be a huge number of people who want to get rid of their Castor coins. Then there'll be someone who'd collect them at a low price. So, who's the one profiting here?"

The red-haired lady tilted her head as she looked at me completely baffled...

I sighed, and said: "The winner would be the ruler of Castor. Castor must be facing a huge financial crisis at the moment. I initially thought it really would rise, but I noticed that their envoy had to resort to sewing on buttons to replace the missing ones on his sleeve. If it were Castell, he would've chosen another robe to wear. A country that can't even spare money for its envoy must be facing financial difficulties. But mentioning monetary value in the face of a financial crisis makes no sense whatsoever."

(Increasing monetary value can improve currency competitiveness, but the country would have to invest greater quantities of rare metals into their currency.)

"But my guess has been proven correct. Castor is facing a financial crisis. The ruler of Castor has already resorted to using cupronickel to replace the silver in their coins. They should be in their experimental stage at the moment. If nobody notices it, then soon there'll be a large scale popularisation of their new silver coins. And as such, their country will earn the difference."

“But that method is akin to only treating the symptoms. Once it’s revealed that they’re actually bronze coins, the competitiveness of their coins will suffer a huge blow. Resorting to killing the goose that lays the golden egg means that Castor is on the brink of bankruptcy.”

I placed the coins down, looked at the completely baffled red-haired lady and continued: “So what does Castor need most right now? They need to retrieve all their silver coins, because their silver coins are actually copper at present. So how can they retrieve all their circulating coins? They’ll need people to hoard them. Everybody is hoarding their coins, waiting for their value to rise right now. When it depreciates, nobody would be willing to suffer the losses, and so they’ll immediately look for somebody to exchange it for them. And so who’s going to be the one who’ll exchange their coins in massive volumes for them?”

“Castor?”

“That’s right. Castor’s trading company was first to spread the news. They want to retrieve all of the Castor coins.”

I stood up, picked up the two coins and then left via the door. I laughed and said: “If it weren’t for this bottle of hydrochloric acid, I probably would’ve never discovered this, since this metal is difficult to distinguish in the first place. But since I’ve discovered what’s going on, Castor now has an exposed weakness. I’m going to personally pay that trade company a visit. I want to sit them opposite me at the negotiation table!”

Translator Comments: Many questions were asked about the uncensored chapters so I’ve put a Q&A below to answer them for you. And please. Please read it. After yesterday’s big announcement, somebody immediately went and wrote a review saying there’s no sex.... As opposed to being triggered (and no I’m not lashing out at him/her), I’m just completely flabbergasted, I’m not going to bother.... Anyway, it’s in the Disqus comments. **Read it.**

Chapter 33

Chapter Sponsored By

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“Greetings sir, I am the finance officer for the Six Horse Carriages, you can just call me Thatch. I heard that you have something important to discuss with us, is that correct?”

I sat opposite the extravagant desk in the office of the trade company. I looked at the man wearing glasses and a long-robe sitting before me, smiling as he looked at me. I waited for a moment, then took out the two coins and placed them on the table. He looked at me surprised and then said with a smile: “If you wish to exchange your currency, you should visit a money changer instead.”

“No, you should know what this implies.”

I leaned my torso over, pointed at the two coins and softly said: “These are bronze coins, aren’t they? Castor’s new silver coins...”

He continued to look at me calmly. He waved his hand feigning ignorance, smiled and asked: “What may you be talking about?”

“Quit acting, Mr Thatch. Your trading company was sent here on orders of the ruler of Castor to seize the coins, am I right? You insist that you don’t do business with Castor, yet I saw someone selling eels with your wooden barrels. Your company has also constantly been spreading the news that the value of Castor’s currency was going to rise, yet the new Castor silver coins are made of

bronze. What you're trying to pull here is very obvious."

Thatch looked at me through his glasses and was caught completely surprised. He then stood up, walked up to the window and drew the curtain. The room went dark. There was only the light coming from the fireplace. I noticed that Nier had already placed her hand on her sword handle. I gently shook my head and continued to watch Thatch.

Thatch stood by the bedside, and did some thinking while pinching his chin. A moment later, he turned around, smiled as he looked at me and said: "There's a price for everything in this world. How much do you want to keep the secret? Please offer me a price that we both can accept. One hundred empire gold coins or two hundred?"

I placed my hands on the table, looked at him, shook my head and said: "Thatch, I don't lack wealth. I'm not threatening you, but saving your country of Castor. The empress has already begun preparations to attack Castor. Your people are at risk."

"So will you save us?"

"No. I'm giving you a way out. To be frank, you people aren't related to me, but I saw the empress kill people before my eyes, I can't stand that. I can't stand helplessly watching people die before me. I know your country's financial situation is poor. If you could return to Castor to inform your king, and then get him to send someone here to negotiate with us, I believe we can reach a plausible conclusion."

Becoming a vassal state is better than getting slaughtered! As a vassal state they just need to pay half of their annual income, but getting conquered would mean their people would have nowhere to go. If we can talk it out then we can avoid a war. I don't want to let more people die before my eyes. I'm not Castor's hero. I just want to use a method that will allow both countries to get the best outcome with minimal repercussions.

Thatch looked at me confused. A second later, he revealed a smile, paused for a moment and said: "Sir, I don't know who you happen to be, but this matter is none of your business. Castor has the ability to protect itself. Our king has already prepared the war ships to sail out. We don't care about the lives of any

others.”

“Are you people insane?!”

I stared at him absolutely stunned. If they decide to fight to their very last man, then I’ll reveal my identity right now, salute them and give up persuading them. A country must hold heroic funerals for its heroes. If I try to persuade a group of men who’d rather die fighting than submit, then I’m essentially insulting them.

But they’re ditching their own people and fleeing! The king may survive, but what about the peasants? What will become of his people? You’re feeding yourself and letting the rest of your family starve. Your people will definitely be slaughtered! Her majesty was nearly killed by another ethnic group, and there’s only one ethnic group in the empire now. There’s no way she’ll allow another ethnicity to exist in her territory.

“Please return. We, Castor will not submit.”

“You people aren’t heroes. You’re cowards!”

“The people will always exist, but there is only one king. Men, see our guest out!”

The door got pulled open violently. Nier drew her sword half-way out and the two men dressed in military clothing watched us vigilantly. Nier stood between us coldly with her half-drawn sword in hand. I looked at Thatch, took in a deep breath and then said: “It looks like our negotiations have broken down. I won’t be considerate of your king in my next moves. Please wait for your bad news.”

“How dare you speak such words in enemy territory?”

Thatch looked at me with a cold smile. I fearlessly stood proud and said: “Would you believe me if I told you that your mercenaries are no match for my bodyguard?”

Nier completely drew her sword and so did the two mercenaries. The atmosphere was set for a fight. Many mercenaries from outside rushed over and blocked the door. Nier looked at them coldly and silently. She wasn’t the least bit afraid. I looked at Thatch, folded my arms and asked: “Thatch, you better think this through. You’re in the territory of the empire. You’re the ones

who are in enemy territory. Putting aside whether you can win or not, how will you deal with the troops that will come and surround this place if we fight?"

Thatch looked at us coldly. I looked back at him without backing down. Nier swept her eyes over the mercenaries surrounding us. The mercenaries were frozen in place by Nier's gaze and didn't dare to move.

"... Let them go."

A second later, Thatch waved his hands, while I pat Nier on her shoulder and she sheathed her sword. I bowed slightly and then turned around to leave.

The negotiation failed.

I thought Castor did what they did for their people. It never occurred to me that it was for a king. Their king ruined the financial situation of such a great city to this degree and now he's fleeing as a war is about to break out. For what reason would anyone serve such a king loyally? I didn't want to save a coward. I wanted to save the innocent citizens.

If a war breaks out, the king can run, but the people will die not knowing what they died for.

I still have a trump card. They wouldn't have ever seized all the Castor coins if their currency depreciated before this fiasco, but as soon as I leave, they will. However, I have the resources of the royal family. I just need to go back and order them to forbid Castor coins from leaving the city, get someone to prove that Castor's currency will depreciate and everything will work out.

This is now a race between Castor and I. If I collect enough Castor coins, I can get the king of Castor to come over here. I'll bet the king is a coward who'll do anything if you put money before him.

Nier and I quickly reached the markets. I looked at Nier and said: "Nier, I need you to immediately rush back to the palace and tell Castell what we know. Get him to use all his available resources to seize the Castor coins. Also, notify her majesty. Ask her to pass down an order that forbids anybody from taking large volumes of Castor coins out of the country. All Castor coins are to be exchanged for empire coins before they may leave. Oh, right, here."

I took my pendant off, placed it into her hand, and said: "Take this with you.

Otherwise those two may not believe you.”

“Your majesty, aren’t you coming back?”

“I can’t go back. They’ve definitely got eyes on me already. Moreover, they’ve definitely begun seizing Castor coins. I’ll use my identity as the prince to stop their deal at the crucial moment. I don’t know what sort of shady tricks they’ll use. If we get caught together, then there’s no way for us to report this. Further, you’re a bodyguard so they’ll definitely prioritise capturing me. I trust that you can successfully return to the palace even if they do attempt to capture you.”

I know I’ll be in a real pinch like this. Those mercenaries would be a bit more fearful if it were Nier. Without Nier, I’m just a powerless guy with a handgun. I’m not worried though. If both Nier and I get captured, then we’re both dead meat. But as long as one of us escapes, the other will become an asset that won’t be killed.

It’s just getting captured. Big deal.

I pat Nier on her shoulder and then said with a smile: “I believe in you, Nier. Don’t worry about me. I reckon I’ll get caught by them though, so I’ll be waiting for you to come and rescue me when the time comes.”

Nier looked at me, sighed and said: “Your majesty, you’re as weak as ever, huh? But I don’t get it. You’re clearly incapable of doing anything, yet you’re putting yourself into a precarious situation. But don’t you die. If you die, I’ll have to kill myself to apologise.”

“This is the conclusion I reached after weighing the odds of the situation. I won’t die, I promise.”

I pointed at the small empty pouch on her belt, and said: “That aside, I think your candy should be delivered by now. I’ll give you some when you come back for me.”

Nier lowered her head to look in the direction of my finger and smiled. She then turned and swiftly left.

I watched her disappear in the crowd and helplessly smiled. I don’t know how many people are following behind me, but for your information, it’s pointless to

capture me now.

Chapter 34

When I opened my eyes, I was surrounded by darkness and I felt a throbbing pain at the back of my head which agitated my nerves. I was in complete darkness but I still felt sick from the rocking which was the equivalent of being caught in an Earthquake. I stared at the darkness around me for a long time before realising I was still alive.

I should be in the trunk of a horse carriage. I could feel the carriage rocking as well as hear the rhythm of the horse hooves. Am I being taken out of the city? No, that's not possible. These people can't possibly take me out of the city. If Nier returned to the palace, then the entire city should be on lockdown right now.

I can't believe I got jumped by the guy selling candy. I thought it was somebody else. I was struck unconscious as soon as I turned around after buying the candy. I only managed to leave behind a clue for Nier during my last moment before completely passing out. People normally wouldn't notice it, but if it's Nier, she'll definitely notice it.

Yes, I got caught like that... There wasn't even an omen beforehand.

The wooden piece of plank I was lying on was suddenly yanked away and I screamed as I fell down. What the hell?! Are they dumping my body?! My hands and feet were still tied, and I still had a bag over my head. If I get dumped into a lake, I'll drown for sure! Wait, wait, wait. I've been taught how to escape when tied up with rope before in class. First, I need to...

Bang!

I fell to the ground with a thud. The air around turned incomparably damp and stinky. There was a stench as well as rust. Have I been thrown into the water?

“Take the bag off his head.”

I was aggressively pulled up from the ground and pinned up to the wall. Somebody aggressively ripped the bag off my head. A man dressed in a long black robe stood before me with his head down as he pinched my chin. His glasses reflected light. I'm sure you could see the reflection even in water. I could taste blood in my throat as he yanked my head upwards. I resisted and exclaimed: “Thatch!”

“Yes, it's me.”

He aggressively let go and my head slammed against the wall behind me again. It hurt so bad I almost shed a tear. Two people stood by my sides with a long sword and hammer hanging from their belts which irritated my eyes. I looked at Thatch and said: “Since we're already acquainted, how about letting me go? I won't tell anyone what I know.”

“What are you talking about? Do you think I'm a retard?”

He aggressively charged over, reached his hand out and grabbed my hair. He then pressed my face against the ground and shouted: “Where's that woman?! Where's that woman that was with you?! Where has she taken the information to, huh?! Speak! Who have you told?! Staying silent won't do jack shit since you're dead meat. Now where's that woman?!”

Every bone in my spinal column was crying and shrieking. You readers can try it out. Tie your hands behind you, kneel on the ground and press your face to ground. I don't know if other people can do it, but I'm not that flexible. My arms felt like they were getting ripped off behind my back. I grit my teeth tightly. I don't know where I got the courage from, but I cracked up laughing.

“Don't kid yourself, mister. You don't have the guts to kill me.”

It looks like I've got myself a death wish. But our soldiers have never submitted and would rather die than sell out, a fact which has remained consistent throughout history. I'm Chinese after all. I'm usually weak, but I'm no pushover when I get interrogated by the enemy.

He let go of my head and followed up with a kick causing my forehead to smash into a grey brick. After the thud, I almost passed out from the impact. He

grabbed my hair and lifted my head. He moved his face closer to mine and viciously said: “I don’t have the guts to kill you? What the fuck gives you that idea?!”

“Because... Because you don’t know where Nier went. You don’t know what the consequences of killing me are, and there’s no point in killing me because the news is already going around. Oh, and now you’re guilty of kidnap as well. Would you rather be accused of murder instead of kidnapping, and get decapitated instead of just a prison sentence for the king of Castor who’s so far away? Further, if Nier hasn’t arrived yet, shouldn’t you be more concerned with finding out from me where we’ve taken the information to?”

He huffed and puffed as he looked at me furiously. It’s pointless for him to kill me. My identity is a mystery to him. If he killed me and I turned out to be the son of an important retainer, the consequences would be severe. What’s more, the news has already been passed on, so I hold no value. Killing me would only add to their troubles. Lastly, only I know where Nier went.

He aggressively let go. My gut was throbbing and I didn’t have the energy to stop myself from chucking up. I gave a cold laugh and lifted my head up to look at him. I was feeling light-headed and my eyes were heavy, but they had no reason to kill me.

“I can’t kill you? You should just fess up. Your funeral will be held after I meet my superior. Nobody will know if you die here. Lock him up in the dungeon and then find out where my superior is!”

Present time inside the palace.

“Is it his majesty’s order?”

Castell looked at the pendant in his hand and then nodded. He handed the pendant back to Nier and said: “I understand. I will go and make the preparations now.”

“Understood.”

Nier took back the pendant, turned around and headed towards the inner court. Castell watched her white cape disappear when she turned the corner. He then clapped his hands and a few people who looked like merchants

appeared from the shadows. They looked at Castell. Castell scanned them, then laughed and said: “Did you people see his majesty get kidnapped?”

“We did, and we also know where he was taken to. Do you want to go save him? Her majesty will favour you even more if you save him.”

“No.”

Castell stretched his hand out to stop them. He then smiled and said: “Saving her son is something her majesty needs to do herself. We as servants shouldn’t fight her for the credit.”

“What of his majesty’s safety then?”

“They won’t dare to kill his majesty. I trust that they’ll go and ask their superiors for their input. When their superiors find out that they kidnapped the prince, they will probably wet themselves out of fear. I think that those old farts will immediately kill their own men, erase all their traces and then vanish, while the others won’t kill his majesty until they receive orders to do so. Instead of getting ourselves involved in such a meaningless matter, why not seize a few more trunks of coins instead? Take some men to go raid the Six Horse Carriages trade company. Fight them if you must to seize the coins. After that, spend some money at the money changers to collect their coins. We have the national treasury supporting us so don’t worry about spending, understood?”

“Understood!!”

The merchants left and Castell sat back into his chair. He played with the gold coin in his hand and fell into a daze as he looked at the empress’s face print on the coin.

Present time at some place.

“Hurry. Hurry you fatty. Get your stuff and let’s go. Her majesty should’ve caught wind of it by now. We don’t have heads to spare!!”

“I know! I know! It’s just that I can’t get my sword out...”

“I told you not to slash his chest and to slash his gut instead, but you wouldn’t listen. Let me do it... Look, I got it!”

“My, my, you really are a soldier. But what are we going to do with this

moron, Thatch's corpse?"

"Aren't they just a bunch of corpses? Shove some weapons in their hands and pass it off as an internal conflict, now let's go!"

"Okay, okay, okay."

Present time at the inner court.

The empress calmly looked at Nier and drew her sword. She then stepped outside her room and clapped her hands.

"What is it, your majesty?"

"Alice, gather the second Valkyrie squad under your command and begin a search in the city. Kill anybody who's interacted with Castor's people. Also, lock the city down and order the guards to search every property. Kill anyone who doesn't cooperate. Nier, take a team of Valkyries and find the prince's whereabouts. I will allow you to ride your horse in the city. It doesn't matter if you trample people to death. Pass my orders on. Order Kurt to prepare his platoon and notify the army at the border that we will attack Castor in a few days' time. Spare no one from Castor. Slaughter them all."

"Roger!"

Alice nodded, and then turned around and left.

"Roger!"

Nier who was kneeling on one knee, got up, unsheathed her sword and left.

The empress took in a deep breath and shouted: "Bring me my steed! I'll dig up the entire city if that's what it takes to see my son! If something happens to my son, I'll erase Castor from this world!!"

Translator Comments: Check comments section for bonus!

Chapter 35

“Ugh...”

I was quivering all over as I crawled along the ground. That kick he gave me to my gut hurt so bad I couldn't even groan. I could taste the blood running down my mouth. I was feeling wheezy. If it weren't for my body being in pain all over, I probably would've passed out already.

“Far out, it would've been much better if we captured that woman instead. We have things we need to do too. What are we going to do with a guy? What else can we do besides beating him up?”

The two mercenaries rubbed their fists and feet as they complained. I struggled to sit up from the ground and huffed and puffed as I leaned against the wall. I know what I did was the equivalent of digging my own grave. I let Nier go so that I could be captured because if I get captured, they'll never leave the imperial capital. And if they can't leave, then they can't take the coins out of the country. They don't have the guts to kill me either. Thatch has been for a long time and hasn't come back.

Either Nier or I had to be captured. The time that it'd take us both to return to the palace to report to Castell and the empress would give them ample time to pack up and leave. There had to be someone who'd stall them and it couldn't be Nier, since she's the only one who can get away unscathed while I'd end up captured half-way there.

“Alright, let's go again.”

The two mercenaries came over towards me again. I forced a smile. While I wasn't going to get beaten to death, it wasn't like I was getting hit with cotton balls or something. The two of them bashed me viciously. A single punch from them made my entire body jerk. Unfortunately for you two, you're facing a man

from a race that gave birth to countless heroes since ancient times. Regardless of how painful it is, I won't...

What the hell am I talking about?! I could just tell them that I'm the prince and this would be over!

Can this be considered as me having protected Nier...?

Probably not. It'd be more accurate to say I offered myself up. My relationship with Nier can't be considered good, can it? Nier has pointed her sword at my throat so many times despite me being the prince of a nation. I've been treated sarcastically and even been encouraged to kill myself by her countless times. But why do I never get angry at Nier?

I spat out a liquid which came from my gut. I don't know what it bloody is. It carried with it the taste of blood and my anguish. My body was sent flying to another corner and then crashing into the wall.

Yeah... How come I don't get mad at Nier? Why do I stand up for Nier? Why do I apologise to Nier? Nier is always sarcastic with me, despises me and mocks me, but why is it that I can't get mad at her? I don't like her or love her, because I know I love Lucia.

But why? In that moment, I was recalling that time we were on the street where Nier knelt down on one knee with a thud.

"Welcome home, your majesty! I, Nier Gilliante, am here to welcome you into the city!"

That's right...

I have a home here too...

I was stunned by her emerald eyes in that moment, and I was touched by her background. I've never come across a girl like Nier before. Am I just curious about her, or have I considered her a family member?

"Mr Thatch still hasn't returned. How should we deal with him? I'm worried he'll die if we keep beating him up."

"So what? How about we just kill him and be done with it? He's probably going to end up dead anyway. I've had enough down in these sewers. Let's just

kill him and get out of here.” I heard the sound of a long sword being drawn.

Ah, I’m really sorry.

I thought wrong.

Thatch may not dare to kill me, but these barbarians don’t care about that much. That’s right. I really will die since Thatch has left.

Sorry, Lucia... I can’t return to you. I couldn’t even die with your pendant in hand. I sighed and shut my eyes. I’ve already died once, so I’m not scared of dying a second time. Who knows, maybe this is a world where I’ll be resurrected in mom’s arms.

I quietly muttered: “Mom...”

I felt the tears from my eyes run down my face which had turned numb.

What a mistake...

I shut my eyes and waited.

I suddenly heard a loud explosion sound in front of me. A few stones landed on my face and clean air blew towards me, bringing the smell of dust and moss with it. I opened my eyes and was surprised to see a white cape in-between myself and the mercenaries. The mercenary before me had a blade through his body.

His body pulsed a few times and fell to one side. Nier expressionlessly whipped her sword to get rid of the blood on it. Her stunning yet compassionless eyes were trained on me. A light from the hole she jumped down from shone through and illuminated the dust as well as her beautiful face. She was the only light down in these dark sewers, shining brightly like an angel.

Nier knelt down on one knee, looked at me and said: “I apologise for my tardiness.”

“Nier...”

“Please don’t call me in a sobbing tone like that. As a prince, you must maintain your dignity at all times.”

“Behind you...”

Nier reversed her sword in her hand and slashed behind her. A spurt of blood was seen in the air once again and its scent started to fill the air. Nier slashed off the mercenary’s entire torso. She kicked his corpse away, sheathed her sword into its scabbard and said: “I sincerely apologise, your majesty. I killed without you giving prior permission.”

“No, it’s fine...”

I used my last ounce of strength to sit up and looked at her with a smile. She paused before frowning and said: “Please don’t look at me with such a disgusting smile!”

“I’m sorry...”

I lowered my head, not because I thought I was disgusting, but because I seriously had no energy left to raise my head. Nier walked up to my side and untied me. She then knelt behind me and didn’t move. I didn’t have the strength to say anything. But right now... I honestly feel really safe.

Really.

“I-It’s good that you’re alright.”

Am I imagining things because I’m hurt too severely? Why do I hear Nier whispering?! Nier didn’t give me a chance to be surprised. She piggy-backed me and shouted. Two people jumped down from the hole that was created by the explosion, and then somebody up top helped to pull me up and out of the sewers.

I see, they opened a hole from the street.

“Your majesty!! Your majesty!!”

I heard somebody’s cries from my side. A petite figure came running over and hugged me. I struggled to open my heavy eyes and noticed Luna who was down by my chest. I laughed lifelessly, reached my hand out and pat her on the head.

“I’m alright...”

Nier from behind me uninterestedly said: “You’re so lucky to still be alive after being beaten up like this. You really are weak, your majesty. If it were her

majesty, forget two men, she'd kill her way out even if there were two-hundred men. Carry his majesty back carefully, and call a doctor to be on stand-by."

"Your majesty!!"

Hey, hey, hey, you people got an injured person on a stretcher here!! Could you please not toss me onto the ground so excitedly at the sound of horse hooves?! I got tossed onto the ground again and puked again.

But before I could complain, I was pulled tightly into an embrace. Her body was very warm. Warm to the point that it helped me relax, and so comfortable my eyelids didn't want to move. She was shivering. She was shivering with fear. She held me tightly in her embrace with her strong arms as though I'd vanish if she loosened up.

"Son... My son... I... I was so worried about you... I... I... I was so scared... Son... Son... I... I was so scared..."

Is this the empress?

I've never seen the empress cry before.

Her voice was cracking. Her tears were landing on my forehead and her body was shivering from fear. Everything was like when I just arrived in this world where I was up against the Earth Dragons.

Her reaction was the same as mom's reaction.

"Son... I beg you... Please be alright... Son... I beg you... I'm so scared... You're my only child... As long as you're alright... As long as you're alright..."

Ah...

Right...

Her majesty... Regardless of how tyrannical and bloodthirsty she may be, she's still my mother nonetheless.

This sort of compassion and love is something only a mom would possess. Only a mother would react like this when she sees that her child has been hurt. She wasn't the empress in that moment, but a mother who was concerned for her child.

“I’m okay... Mom...”

I mustered up all my strength to lift my arm up and lightly place it on mom’s back. Mom jerked her body when I touched her, and then she burst out crying.

That’s right...

She’s also my mom...

Chapter 36

“Kurt, how are the preparations for the army I asked for coming along?”

The conference chamber is rarely used at night. Back before the country became stable, the empress however, did often hold meetings with her retainers late at night. However, after attaining peace, conferences were only held during the day unless there was something that needed to be discussed with the utmost urgency. The empress was capable of handling anything else.

However, all the major retainers were gathered in the conference chamber this time. The empress dressed in her battle attire and equipped her Commander Sabre once again.

That meant that she was waging war, and that she was personally taking to the frontlines.

Kurt knew that his head would roll instantly if he said preparations weren't ready. The empress's tone was very calm, but the calmer she is, the scarier she is. When the empress gets mad, she throws things and beats people, but when she gets extremely angry, she becomes quiet instead.

“Your majesty, the preparations are complete.”

“What about the troops by the border?”

“They've been ordered to move as fast as they can and should arrive in two days.” Kurt raised his head, looked at the empress and continued: “Your majesty, I do not think you need to personally join the front lines. You are our great empress. It is not right for you to personally join the fray for such a small scale battle. We... We are not back at the time where we were establishing our empire. It is fine for you to stay in the rear.”

“Castor's people kidnapped my son. I must personally raze Castor to the ground. I've changed my mind. I don't need a port or trade centre river delta. I want to conquer a scorched land. I want that place to be cursed by the gods!

You've captured all the Castor people in the city, right? All those with the blood of Castor in them have been captured, correct? Good. Concoct wine from their blood for me before we set out!!! Oh, right, right, right. I want to use the skull of Castor's envoy as my cup of wine!"

The empress took out a dagger and violently stabbed it onto map lying on the table. Her domineering voice was like a bell roaring in everybody's ears. Her anger spread throughout the entire chamber and not one person dared to raise their head. Even the candles stopped swaying as though it was their version of bowing their heads out of fear.

A voice from outside broke the oppressive atmosphere in the conference chamber: "Your majesty! His majesty has arrived!"

"My son?!"

The empress got surprised, quickly sat down on her thrown and shouted: "Make way for his majesty!!"

The retainers kneeling on the ground moved aside. Nier helped me into the conference chamber. My chest was still in a bit of pain. I was told my internal organs got injured, but I honestly don't trust the medical skills of humanity's doctors. They made me have a venesection in my injured state! Were you people trying to kill me?! You can't just perform a venesection because of a blood clot!

Luckily Luna was there. Luna is an elf and was a priest of a temple in a small village so she could use healing magic. It was thanks to Luna's treatment that I healed a lot. If not for her, I wouldn't even be able to stand.

The empress ran over to me and supported me. Her domineering expression turned gentle like water. She carefully supported me and worriedly asked me: "Son, you're not well yet so don't move around excessively. Is there anything you would like to eat? I'll get someone to prepare it.... Is there something you want to say, son?"

I struggled to raise my head and smiled at mom. I then gently pushed Nier away and wobbled up to the table with the map on it. I reached my hand out, grabbed the dagger handle and tried to pull it out.

I couldn't pull it out. The empress is too strong. It's like the dagger had roots growing in the table. I couldn't even get it to budge. The empress walked up to me, looked at the retainers below and shouted: "Salute his majesty!"

"Your majesty!"

"Don't..."

I stretched my hand out... My head hurts and with you people shouting like that... Far out...

I took in a deep breath, tensed my body up so that I wouldn't end up on the floor, stood proud and looked at the retainers below. I shouted as loud as I could: "Castell!"

"Present."

Castell came forth from a direction I never expected. He looked at me and saluted me. He then smiled and said: "Your majesty, I have completed the task you asked of me. We collected a total of five chests of Castor's coins. There are no more Castor coins circulating in the imperial capital."

"Son, what's..."

"Sorry, mom... Your majesty...."

"No, just call me mom. It doesn't matter where we are, just call me mom."

The empress's eyes were shimmering. She tightly held my hands and stroked them. I looked at her and said: "Mom, if possible, please order the army to disband and pass down another order. Notify the army at the border that they don't have to be in combat status as well. You don't need to prepare to go to war either, mom. Just let those related to Castor go."

"But, I... You..."

"No, it's not like that. I don't intend on letting Castor off the hook. But the reason we've needed Castor is because of their territorial position as well as their wealth. If we raze their land, then we're essentially putting the cart before the horse... I have an idea that can turn Castor into a vassal state of ours."

The empress looked at me and I could see from her eyes that she didn't believe me. But she's always let me have my way ever since I started calling her

mom.... No.... I don't intend to overrule her! I don't intend to vie for power! It's just that mom has become the type of mother who'd give her child anything he asked for!

I looked at the retainers below and pointed at the table. Nier placed down two silver coins. I looked at the retainers below who still didn't dare to raise their heads, smiled and said: "As you can all see, these are Castor's silver coins. One is the version that was previously circulating while the other is a recently released version. There's no difference in terms of style between the two, regardless of whether its weight or the print on them, they're the exact same. Even their lustre is the same. However, what you should all know is that the new silver coin isn't made from silver, but bronze."

"Bronze?!"

One of the men from the formal clothing party shouted out. Nier drew her sword. I extended my hand out to stop Nier and continued: "That's right. It's a bronze coin. What does this indicate? This indicates that Castor is struggling financially and that they've had to resort to replacing silver coins with bronze coins. That's why they needed to collect their silver coins. Now, how will they control the circulation of their silver coins? They spread rumours and said that Castor was going to increase the silver in their coins to be competitive with the empire's coins. Because of that, people started hoarding, and after that they would announce that the amount of silver was in actual fact reduced. As a result, those who hoarded the coins would've shot themselves in the foot and therefore rush to exchange their coins. They could then swap the bronze coins for silver coins at a low price. They might've then taken the silver coins and refined them using some rare metal. Using such a desperate measure to address a symptom indicates that Castor's finances are at rock-bottom, and they may possibly be deep in debt."

I almost passed out from lack of oxygen saying so much in one breath. The empress was concerned and supported my back. I took in a few big breaths and continued: "As such, the success of their plan rides on whether or not they can re-collect all the silver coins. But now those coins are in our hands. They no longer have any money to use and will subsequently come here to beg us. When they do come, we can make them our vassal state without shedding a

drop of blood. The above... Cough, cough, cough!”

“Son!”

“Mom... Instead of killing the envoy, how about letting him return to report to them. The king of Castor will personally pay us a visit within three days. When he does arrive, it’ll be up to you... Cough, cough.... Sorry... Mom... I’m a bit tired... I’m heading back to rest. Goodnight. Please do not ask the retainers to move.”

I honestly couldn’t hang in there any longer. I lowered my head and bid her goodnight. Nier then supported my shoulder as we slowly left the conference chamber.

The empress watched us from behind for a long time as we disappeared into the night before she let out a heavy sigh, and revealed a consoled smile. She then waved her hand and in her rare cheerful tone said: “You all heard what my son said. Leave now. Kurt, disband the army, and let those people go. Castell, you take over presiding over those matters.”

“Understood!”

The retainers uniformly got up to prepare to depart. From behind the retainers, in a happy tone, the empress said: “Oh, right. You don’t have to see me if something comes up in future. You all saw his performance. My son is now a qualified emperor.”

Chapter 37

This chapter is entirely sponsored by Jonathan.

Chapter Start

“You don’t know how to look after yourself. I told you to rest properly!”

Luna was slightly angry as she knelt before me. The green glowing light from her hand slowly disappeared. I let out a long sigh as my body warmed up. My sore and aching body felt like it was injected with an anaesthetic and felt very comfortable. Luna stood up and worriedly said: “I can’t seem to detect... Your mana... But your blood clots and injuries are almost remedied. Please slowly heal your exterior injuries.”

“Yeah... Thanks.”

I’m much more relaxed around Luna now compared to before since we’re both elves after all. Further, elves don’t place a distinct hierarchy between themselves. However, we have to ensure that nobody is around when Luna heals me with her magic, otherwise Nier may forbid elves from using magic within humanity’s territory.

“I’m curious as to why you insisted on staying behind. Would it not have been fine if you had both returned together? Would you not have been able to avoid getting hurt?”

I smiled weakly, looked at her and replied: “I would’ve if I could’ve. I was being considerate of two things. First, I didn’t know what sort of methods they had to deal with us. If we both got caught in a death-trap, it’d be all over. If we were to split up, they’ll act somewhat reserved. It’s harder to capture two targets than it is to capture one. Second, there had to be someone who’d stall them. Had we both returned to the palace, they would’ve realised that something wasn’t right, and packed up and left. Had that happened, all our efforts would’ve been for naught... They may look like that, but they did manage to collect three chests of silver coins. When I went there previously, all their horse carriages were ready so they could’ve left as soon as loaded the chests on. When I chose to stay behind, they captured me, which was the equivalent of bringing along a burden. It took time to capture me, time to drag me away and they couldn’t leave with me in tow. The imperial capital has no

sea routes for them to leave by, therefore they'll have to pass the patrol inspections. When they caught me, they basically trapped themselves in the imperial capital."

"But they could have left if they just killed you off, correct?"

I shook my head and replied: "I made a gamble that they wouldn't kill me. Firstly, there were two of us. If I sent Nier to report it, then their question would be, to whom did we report to, because they didn't even know our identities. They could've learnt who they had to deal with from me. Secondly, there was no point in killing me. Nier already left. If she had reported it, it made no difference whether I was dead or alive. In fact, killing me would've only further complicated things. Thirdly, and also the most important factor was that they had no idea who I was. They had to seek the advice of their superiors before being able to do anything to me. However, he never returned in the end."

Luna nodded and looked at me sort of like she worshipped me to some degree and said: "Did you think of all that in a split moment? You are a really smart prince! But were you not worried that you would die in the sewers if Miss Gilliante could not find you?"

I smiled. That was something I was proud of.

Everything I previously mentioned was reliant on luck, especially the part about them not daring to kill me. My guess for that was almost wrong. Nier, however, was able to find me. That's something I must believe. It's not that we have interlinked hearts between lovers or something. And no, we don't have some sort of soul-calling system. It's quite simple.

I smiled at Nier who pushed the door open and said: "It's because I trust Nier."

Nier looked at me with a frown and then said: "Please don't talk about such a sick topic while you're hurt. Your trust in me isn't anything good. I saved you because, one, it's my responsibility to, and two, because I wanted you to make good on your promise.... So, where's my candy?"

Nier extended her hand out to me. I looked at her with a smile. Luna looked at us both stupefied. We didn't say anything, but the moment my eyes met Nier's, we understood what one another was thinking.

Nier looked at me and sternly said: “Your majesty, you need to thank that group of kids properly. Without them, I would’ve lost your traces. It was they who went down into every sewer and listened for your traces which allowed me to find you.”

“Yes, I know.”

“Umm... Umm... Your majesty, what... What exactly is going on? How exactly did you and Miss Gilliante...”

I turned around to look at Luna who was wearing a confused look and laughed out loud. I then pointed at the small bag hanging from Nier’s belt and said: “It’s simple. That should be considered my smartest move. I promised to buy Nier candy, so when I got knocked out, I tore open the bag and hung it from my belt before I lost conscious. So when they took me away, the candy balls rolled out one by one. The kids, of course, wouldn’t ignore the candy balls on the ground. When I was thrown down into the sewers, the candy bag consequently got left on the ground. Nier followed the childrens’ route and discovered I was down in the sewers.”

“The kids go into the sewers in winter to avoid the cold and seek warmth, so they’re familiar with every sewer. They listened in to the sounds in the sewers and found his majesty.”

Nier folded her arms, looked at me and said: “I must say, you’re very intelligent, your majesty. But the important fact is, the credits belong to the group of children.”

“You’re right. I’ll go thank them once I’ve recovered, however... What should I gift them...?”

Nier looked at me resolutely and in a taken for granted tone asked: “How about dolls? Her majesty personally made a doll for every Valkyrie. It’s our most treasured item. Don’t all children like dolls?”

The image of the doll I picked out of the water last time appeared in my mind. Are you sure that’s a doll? Give me a block of wood and few bits of cloth; I’ll make you a doll. While a teru teru bozu doll is considered a doll, it’s completely different to the traditional concept of dolls that kids like have!!

“Mmm... Are you telling me to make dolls myself?”

“Yes.”

“No, no, no, no. Only girls actually like dolls. I think it’s better to just ask them what they want.”

I don’t think Nier can provide me with any appropriate suggestions given her life experiences... But to be honest, I don’t know what to gift children either. I’ve given birthday gifts to boys and girls, but never to children. I think that food is the best gift for children living in the slums.

I’ll bring them some empress bread next time.

Alice suddenly came in and knocked on the door. She then politely bowed at the door and shouted: “Her majesty has arrived.”

The empress stood by the door with a ceramic bowl in hand and didn’t dare to come in. Her face looked a bit tense. I tried to get up, but Nier extended her hand out and stopped me.

“Wha-?!”

Why?! Why?! Why did you press down on my arms and legs?! What are you people up to?! Your majesty, what are you people up to?!

“Son... You’re hurt, yet... Mom hasn’t done anything.... That’s unbecoming of me as a mother...”

With the bowl in hand, the empress walked up to me. A weird smell came from the bowl. My warning lights were flashing red. The empress coyly sat by my side and placed the bowl to a side. I took the opportunity to check it out. There was some weird stuff I’d never seen before floating around in the bowl. The entire bowl was a dangerous tinge of purple... You tell me! Tell me why there’s a bowl of purple soup! Even seaweed and egg soup doesn’t turn purple!!

“I... I... Personally went to the kitchen... And made you a bowl of soup.... I recovered immediately after I had one bowl when I caught the cold last time... I’ll feed you. You just have to eat.”

Mom stroked my head and then lifted the bowl up with a smile I can’t

describe. Alice and Nier pressed down on me harder, and Nier's eyes said: "If you don't drink it, I'll hack you to pieces"

...

I don't have a cold, I'm injured!! I don't have a cold!! Are you sure that's edible?! Save me! No! Actually, just leave me alone! Don't! Don't!

"Open your mouth, son. Aah~"

"Ah..."

After that...

I passed out...

Translator Comments: Scroll down to comments for a visual.

Chapter 38

Another chapter completely sponsored by Jonathan.

Chapter Start

Alice sat in the water, comfortably stretched her back and said: “Fuah... Having a bath feels great after finishing a job...”

Nier, who was sitting across from her captain, combed her hair into a bun and dipped it into the bath.

The Valkyries’ bathroom is for public use. While they were for public use, a few baths had written instructions on them. Alice is the squad captain while Nier is the sword instructor. Only the two of them were permitted to use the largest bath and didn’t have to clean up. The two of them bathed in the water, listening to the water gently bubble as well as the laughs of the Valkyries behind them. The beautiful bodies of the girls were partially hidden and partially revealed by the water. The place was simply heaven for guys.

But that’s if there weren’t long swords placed by the edges of the baths.

Alice picked up a glass of beer by the side, and shouted loudly to all the Valkyries in the water: “It’s been tough on you all.”

The Valkyries paused for a moment and then shouted in unison: “Long live her majesty!”

“Long live her majesty!”

Nier’s voice was slightly slower than the rest. Alice smiled and swam over to Nier’s side, pat her on her shoulder and asked: “Nier, my dear child, is something bothering you?”

“No...” Nier shook her head and took in a deep breath before dipping her head into the water and blowing bubbles. Alice smiled, then looked at the Valkyries behind her entering the baths one by one and said: “How many did you all kill in the previous mission? How many scums from Castor did you kill during that opportunity?”

“Fifteen!”

“Sixteen!”

“Seventeen... It’s all because the places I got assigned to weren’t good!”

“Twenty one!”

“Don’t bring up your twenty one. You just added in the random guys you killed!”

“I didn’t count!”

The Valkyries happily played around in the baths. If that place were the bathroom of normal girls, they wouldn’t be talking about such a bloody topic. To them, killing is something to be proud of, a form of glory. They don’t have any topics to discuss. But as soon as it’s about this sort of subject, they chat about it excitedly the same way normal girls talk about crushes and loves.

“Puah...”

Nier popped her head out the water, shook her hair and breathed out. Alice looked at her with a smile and hushed her. She then pat Nier on her shoulder and said: “Let’s hear Instructor Nier’s battle achievements. Nier is the most skilled with the sword, and this whole event was revolved around the prince. Nier, you must’ve killed a fair lot, huh?”

“Instructor!”

Nier rubbed her neck and said: “I... Two.”

“Th-Then what about when you started being around the prince?”

“Two... Wait, no. Three...”

Nier shrugged and said: “His majesty ordered me not to kill casually, so I can’t draw my sword whenever I’m in his presence. When people go after his majesty, he doesn’t get angry either, so I can’t kill anyone.”

“.....”

Everybody fell into a silence. Alice was silent for a moment too, but then asked: “Nier, is his majesty really that weak?”

“Yeah. Very. Weak.”

Nier stood up, and the water on her body dripped into the pool. She looked startled as she looked at the drops of water run down her body. What it

should've been, were drops of blood.

Nier got out of the bath, picked up her towel to cover herself, then turned round to look at Alice and said: "Captain, give me a few people. I want to sharpen my blade."

Alice nodded and replied: "Alright."

A while later, the two of them arrived at the Valkyries' training grounds. The Valkyries' training grounds are also located in the palace, hidden in the forests behind the lake. No one really knows how many corpses are buried under the grounds of the forest. All those decomposed corpses must be the reason the trees there were so lush.

Their leaves were as though they were soaked in red blood.

Alice handed a sword to Nier, pat her on her shoulder and said: "Seventeen men, just like before."

"Understood."

Nier drew her sword and entered the training area. Seventeen men dressed in leather armour bowed deeply when they saw Nier enter. Nier counted their numbers, whipped her sword and said: "Same old. If you can hurt me, I'll let you go. If you manage to kill me, you'll be conferred a rank. Come at me together."

"As you command!"

The seventeen men holding long swords charged at Nier who stood before them. Those men came from different walks of life and ranks. They came to challenge the empress's personal guards for a chance at a promotion. Countless farmers, peasants and children from slums train diligently for the sake of attaining fame by challenging Valkyries. But not one has been successful thus far.

As a matter of fact, not one lived to tell the tale.

Nier took in a deep breath and rushed the men before her. Her white cape spread out in the air like a flag. Only a faint after-image of her sword was seen and the man at the forefront had his sword knocked out of his hand. Before he could shout, his artery burst.

His blood sprayed all over Nier. The blood ran down into Nier's mouth.

"Why?"

Nier was surprised. Why? Why did the blood make her feel disgusted? Why did she hate that feeling? She was never like this before. She needed to elegantly soak herself with her enemies' blood to feel comfortable, so why? Why? Why does she now hate the smell of blood and gooey feel of it?

"Hng!"

Nier barely dodged a strike and countered by stabbing her sword through the gut of another man. She kicked the corpse away, and then turned around to bump away a man who tried to cut her. She elegantly turned her body around and slashed his throat open.

The taste of blood got richer, yet she was feeling sicker. The food in her gut wanted to escape as the blood ran down her face. What originally stimulated her urge to kill was now making her sick and made her want to run away.

Nier never felt that way before. Why? Why did she become like this? She was born to spill blood. She was born to kill. Why? Why was she sick of killing? Why did she hate blood? Why? Why was her body feeling weak...

With just a few men left, Nier's actions started losing their edge. She wobbled around as if she were going to kneel down. Seeing her condition, the men roared and charged towards her.

"Out of the way!"

Alice pushed the Valkyries watching by the door, charged in towards the front of one of the men, and punched him in his chest. The back of his torso exploded to bits and his organs flew out of his back. Alice didn't bother with Nier who was surprised, instead reducing all the remaining men to smithereens.

The sky was raining blood and bits of flesh.

Gag!

Nier dropped to her knees with a thud on the training grounds littered with blood, bits of flesh, and puked, spraying everything in her gut up into the air. She had no idea what she was chucking up, but her stomach was pulsating. She

threw her sword away and focused on puking.

“Captain... Captain...”

Nier struggled to raise her head, and with a sobbing voice looked at Alice with a sobbing tone and confused look. She choked on her voice as she shouted: “Captain... Captain... What... What exactly... Is wrong with me... What exactly is...”

Alice crouched down, ignored the blood and filth on the ground, and tightly hugged Nier whom was suffering.

“It’s okay... It’s okay... You’re just too tired. You’re just too tired...”

Chapter 39

“Alright, let us do this. Take a step this way. Go back. Go back two steps. Hands. Pay attention to your hands! You are too stiff, your majesty. Try again. One, two, three, four, good. Not bad...”

I let out a sigh and wiped the sweat off my forehead. Luna ran over to me and handed me a cup of honey-lemon ice water. Ice didn't exist yet in this era. This ice was taken from the snowy mountain in the East. The ice was transported here slowly in small amounts, which is why only royalty gets to enjoy iced water.

Luna picked up her silk handkerchief and wiped the sweat on the corner of my forehead, looked at the lady-in-waiting with concern and said: “His majesty has just recovered, so let's wrap up here today.”

“I'm fine, it's just dance practice.”

I smiled and placed the exquisite cup down. I then looked at my dance partner who looked like a girl who was carefully selected from a noble family. She was quite pretty, but she was relatively shy and didn't dare to touch me. The lady-in-waiting looked at me slightly concerned and said: “Your majesty, if you are not feeling well, please let me know.”

I smiled weakly and said: “Ah, I'm fine. It's just that I lost my appetite recently...”

I lost my appetite partially because of that weird soup. I still have no idea what ingredients were used to make that soup. It smelt like burnt rubber and harassed my nose. Everything I ate the following day seemed to have the smell of rubber as well which was why I lost my appetite...

Nier stood at the door with her back to us. Nier has been lifeless lately. When I tried to ask her about it, she just gave me glares and coldly replied, “Nothing”.

“Since that’s the case, let us wrap up for today. You have already learnt the basics. All you need to do now is practice diligently.” The lady-in-waiting and my dance partner gave a deep bow and then said goodbye. Luna sent the two off while I threw myself onto the chair to the side, undid the button right at the top of my shirt and let out a sigh of relief.

Castell has already sent the news out and Castor has already responded. Their king personally wrote a response letter saying he was willing to come over and negotiate with us. If the negotiation is successful, Castor will become our vassal state.

In other words, this matter is basically over. And if they become our vassal state, we can get them to lower the tariff fees, or even get rid of them all together and get them to ensure that their goods fulfil our requests. Since our country would be providing yours with protection, you can withdraw your navy. You’ll only need our protection. You can keep a few sailing boats. Your army can disband too. Just keep a unit to perform routine monitoring and patrols. Other than maintaining your independence in name, you can leave everything else to us.

That’s what it means to be a vassal state.

Put another way, I’ve saved Castor from a crisis and satisfied the empress’s wishes at the same time. Plus, I got to act competent in front of the retainers, so they sincerely bow and salute me when they encounter me in the palace now.

“Your majesty, Mr Castell seeks an audience with you.”

Luna came back, looked at me, softly sighed and said: “Ever since you came back, lots of people have asked to see you. If you are not feeling well, you should turn them away.”

“I can turn everybody but Castell down. He helped me a month ago, even though the weapon idea he gave me was out dated...”

I stood up and Luna ran over to support me. I chuckled and said: “I’m okay, I’ve recovered. Tell Castell to go to the dining hall. Luna, prepare some dishes.”

“Understood.”

Luna turned around and went downstairs. As my close servant, she does far too much. However, I don't intend to have anybody else look after me. Although I now accept this place as being my home and her majesty as my mom, I still miss the elf imperial capital. Luna reminds me of all the little things about Lucia.

I walked out the door and said to Nier who was standing there: "Let's go, Nier."

Nier nodded and then followed behind me.

Castell was already at the dining hall when I arrived. He sat in the guest seat and had the maid prepare his napkins. Luna pulled my chair out for me, and then prepared my napkin and the small silver bowl for me to wash my hands in. I used the fragranced water to wash my hands, then looked at Castell and said: "Castell, you completed your tasks excellently this time."

"Thank you for your compliments, your majesty." Castell bent forward at his hips to bow with a smile, then looked at me and said: "Your performance has also won my complete respect. I was amazed by your intellect when we were at the elf nation. I was also very surprised when you were able to see through such a convoluted ploy here in humanity's nation. I also suspected that the silver coins were frauds, but I never found any clues."

I chuckled. You can't believe everything Castell says. How could somebody as smart as Castell not have seen through Castor's ploy? I think he knew it, but didn't mention it to her majesty because he was unsure what she thought. And from the look of things, Castell is a close retainer of the empress, so he must know how to look after himself.

"A toast to her majesty."

The two of us raised our glasses. The first glass is to pay our respects to her majesty. I drank a mouthful of the mellow wine, then placed my glass down and said: "You're in charge of negotiating with Castor, right?"

"Castell nodded and said: "That is correct. I have brought with me our initial demands which I have written down on a sheet of paper. Would you please take a look, your majesty."

“What about her majesty?”

“Her majesty has already provided her orders.”

“Then do as she said. Why are you bringing it up with me?”

Castell smiled as he shook his head and then said: “Your joke is not funny, your majesty. You are already a major figure in everybody’s eyes. You did not think that you could avoid political matters after that event now, did you? Your majesty, you have already gotten yourself involved, and are considered a dazzling new star. The two factions will try and curry favour with you from now on.”

I smiled bitterly, picked up the empress bread before me and said: “Is that so? I was mentally prepared, but it still feels somewhat surreal.”

“Your majesty, my advice to you is to not attend any private balls. Do not attend any events prepared by the army, do not accept gifts and do not see guests at night. If you can do that, you will be fine. If you can maintain a political power balance, you will be fine.”

I looked at Castell, laughed and said: “Well, you’re my guest tonight.”

“I belong to the empress faction. Showing me a special favour is the equivalent of showing her majesty a favour. Nobody can say anything about a son being attached to his mother. To celebrate you taking a perfect step into the political arena, I would like to honour you with my second glass. Your majesty, I wish you the best of health. Long live her majesty.”

Our glasses clinked together gently for a toast. The wine as red as blood swished around inside. We exchanged smiles, had our drink and then started eating dinner. This is Castell’s second dinner at the outer court. I think people would definitely think that Castell was my favoured retainer if they saw us.

But I could tell that Castell didn’t devote his loyalty to me. As he said previously, he won’t protect me. He belongs to the empress faction, so he’ll only protect the empress. To be honest, I want to have a squad like the Valkyries for myself and my own power. But would that cause a misunderstanding with the empress?

Well, whatever. I don’t intend to contend for power. I’m fine with just Nier

protecting me. Nier says she hates me. She frequently makes sarcastic remarks and mocks me, but she saved me when I was in a pinch. That is enough for me. Nier understands what my thoughts are and she'll protect me.

Yeah, I should focus on learning to dance next. That way, Nier won't be able to stomp on my feet when we next dance.

Chapter 40

“Elves have no way to produce gunpowder?!”

“That’s right. It’s because it can easily damage the forests, so elves will never use gunpowder.”

I looked at the red-haired lady completely stunned. She was smoking her pipe and threw me a half-completed gun. She massaged her shoulders and said: “Oh, I just found out you were making it for an elf. Elves can’t use guns. You don’t have to worry. Whichever elf uses a gun is a traitor to them and will be exiled. Elves won’t produce gunpowder either, so even if you gave that gun to that female elf, she wouldn’t be able to use it.”

“Why didn’t you mention that from the start then?!”

“Because I wanted to make the gun as well. Prince, this gun of yours is really fascinating. Its structure isn’t complex, yet it can fire consecutively. If these were to be mass produced, what do you think...”

“Don’t, don’t, don’t! Don’t ever do that!”

“I know, I know. I don’t have any interest in making money from it. I’m just interested in these machines.”

She hit me on my head with her pipe, then got up, walked to the other side and had two puffs. I pushed the gunpowder by the side far away, looked at her tobacco pipe, frowned and said: “How do you have the guts to smoke in here where there’s gunpowder? Normally, you shouldn’t even have candles in here.”

“What’s with all the complaints, kid? I’ve been like this for many days already. There were never any explosions. Don’t worry, don’t worry. I started working with gunpowder long before you did. But, the gunpowder you made really doesn’t release smoke. That’s incredible.”

“This gunpowder explodes much easier than the black gunpowder, so be careful.” I angrily pushed away her pipe, then frowned and continued: “What should I make next...? Elves can’t use gunpowder... Oh yeah! An airgun!!”

Yeah!

Wouldn't an airgun be the best weapon of choice for Lucia since she can control wind? Airguns rely on the principles of air compression. Her skill is basically a live air pump. And airguns don't require bullets. You can just use projectiles. I can create a rifle that can fire consecutively now. It's going to be very close to the modern day rifle!

I stood up, pulled a sheet of paper over and scribbled on it. The red-haired lady excitedly walked over to me and excitedly said: "Have you come up with something good again? Wow, this looks like it'll be even more interesting!!"

After about ten minutes, I blew out a breath of air, and cheerfully picked up the sheet of paper, handed it to the red-haired lady and said: "Just make it like this. You can make as many of these as you like, because only one person can use it."

"Okay, let's have a look. This gun of yours is really fascinating."

She felt satisfied and took it from me. I'll leave the manufacturing process to her. She really enjoys creating these never-before-seen types of things. She won't mass produce them, but will keep one for her own collection. She's very proud of the fact that her workshop is the first to stock never-before-seen items. I suppose it's a collector's habit.

But that's fine. I can turn this place into my own personal workshop like this. If I need to form my own guard unit in the future, I'll make the guns for them here.

I walked out of the workshop. When Nier saw me, she extended her hand out. I looked at her and asked: "What's wrong?"

Nier simply replied: "Candy."

Behind her, several eyes were blinking as they looked at me. Their gazes hurt me deeply, because... I'm really sorry, but the candy I prepared for you all got scattered on the roads... I've been trying to recover these last few days and haven't left the palace, so I forgot about it... I forgot...

"Sorry... Nier..."

"Your majesty, don't tell me you forgot. These children were the main contributors in your rescue. Can you consider yourself a qualified prince if you

fail these children?”

Nier’s expression didn’t change as she spoke. She just coldly spoke a truth I had no comeback for.

“It’s my mistake...”

I lowered my head and sincerely apologised. She spoke with a just a cold tone, but I could tell that she was slightly mad as her face was faintly red. I smiled helplessly, took out a bag I prepared just for today, bent over and gave it to the disappointed children. When they curiously opened it, the aroma of honey and spices burst forth, which froze even Nier in place. The empress bread, a bread that only royalty has the privilege of eating. Even the Valkyries only got a glimpse of it when the empress rewarded them with it. I specially asked for the cooks to prepare some more so I could share it with the children.

“Wooooow!”

The children cried in a sharp tone and fought over the bread. White bread must be rare to them, let alone the addition of honey and spices. The contrast between their small dirty hands and the white bread saddened me, but unfortunately, there’s no way to eliminate all poverty from the world. Sometimes it’s due to the politics, but in a peaceful time like this, it’s sometimes because of people gambling and going bankrupt. That’s a mistake we brought on ourselves.

Nier looked at them and counted. She then hesitated for a moment before turning around to look at the eldest of the group and said: “There are two missing. Are the Ali sisters not here today?”

The kids froze for a brief moment when Nier brought them up. A kid then shook his head and quietly said: “A group of large men rocked up at Ali’s family’s home... Those men are really scary...”

The kids starting chattering amongst themselves. I looked at Nier. Nier’s eyes had turned ice-cold. Her right hand gripped her sword handle. She took a deep breath, looked at me and said: “Your majesty.”

I, who once lived in a modern era knew what was going on. I nodded without hesitation. Nier got up when she received my approval. I looked at the children and said: “Take us to Ali’s house. Selling children is going overboard. I’ll help out if there are any problems.”

“Okay!”

Nier and I followed behind the children and squeezed through a dark alley. I looked at the children dressed in haggard clothing in front of me and felt upset. These children were pitiful. Not only do they face survival issues, they have to face safety issues too. Nobody can say for certain when these kids might die here. I know well how chaotic the slums are since I experienced it in the red-light district.

“I beg you! I beg you! I’ll pay! I’ll pay you! Don’t touch my daughter! I beg you!”

When we turned a corner, we saw a street that wasn’t very broad. A few men grabbed a woman and smashed her head onto the floor. She tightly gripped the man’s leg and didn’t let go even though her head was bleeding. The few other men by the side pushed a man who’d lost consciousness over. The man that was pushed aside had a dagger stuck in his stomach and his head smashed straight onto the ground. He was killed.

The man who the woman was clinging to, had two crying kids under his arm. He struggled to get the woman off his leg. He eventually got angry and threw the two kids onto the ground, pulled out a short flint pistol from his belt, pointed it at the woman’s head and loudly shouted: “LET GO! I’LL PUT A BULLET IN YOUR HEAD IF YOU DON’T LET GO! IT’S ONLY FAIR TO REPAY A DEBT! YOU OWE A DEBT, AND WE’RE TAKING THE TWO KIDS AS PAYMENT, WHAT ARE YOU UNHAPPY ABOUT?! KEEP SCREAMING AND I’LL MURDER YOUR ENTIRE FAMILY RIGHT HERE!”

“ALI!!”

The kids standing by our side watching, immediately shouted and rushed over when they saw the two kids get thrown onto the ground. The girl lying on the ground stood up while still crying and extended her hand towards her mother. When the woman saw Nier and I, she seemed to come to some sort of decisive

decision and pushed her daughters towards Nier and I. When one of the men on the other side saw her, he immediately prepared to catch the young girls.

But how could he possibly have succeeded?

Nier's sword got there first and she protected the girls.

"Who are you people?! Mind your own business! You got no fucking business here. How dare you interfere with our business?! Do you even understand what death is?!"

The leader kicked Ali's mom away, turned around to face Nier and I shouted: "Nier! Put your sword away!"

"I"

Nier turned around and gave me a violent glare. I walked up to her, pulled Ali behind me and pressed her sword down. I looked at the man and said: "Their mother has a gun to her head, don't be impulsive. Since they owe you a debt, they just need to pay the debt and all will be fine. I'll pay her debt, but you must let go of her first!"

"Ptoo!"

Nier was angry. She could kill. She could kill whenever she wanted, even if the target was an official. That's a privilege the Valkyries have, and also their habit. It wouldn't take her much effort to kill all the men before us. But my words were the equivalent of a royal decree. Nier won't dare to oppose my order, even if she didn't want to.

"You people should mind your own business. Judging from your clothing, you aren't ordinary people, are you? The slums have their own set of rules, and we happen to be the rule here!"

He completely ignored me, and pointed his gun at Ali's mother's head again.

Shit!

I looked at the eyes of the man with the gun. His eyes were filled with insanity, which told me he was serious. I wanted to calm him down and sort out the debt, but he was eager to kill!

"Ni-!!"

BANG!

A loud bang was heard before I could give my order. The scent of blood was mixed with the scent of smoke. I looked at Ali's mom lying in a pool of blood, as blood poured forth from her forehead.

"MOM!!"

Ali shrieked from behind me. Their shriek was like a knife stabbing at my temples. I took in a deep breath, looked at Nier, turned around and said: "Nier."

"Your majesty."

"Kill them all..."

That was the first time I realised I could sound so cold. Those men lost their lives before me just like that. I couldn't do anything. The only thing I could do now was take their lives to offer them as a sacrifice to Ali's mother...

Benevolence and morality are my bottom lines when doing things. But if the other party chooses not to respect my bottom line, then know that I too can be crazy and break my own rules.

I pushed Ali over to the group of children. Even naive children would be scared of my cold demeanour and run away. I had my back to the group of men and listened to Nier's sword hack and slash them, as well as their shrieks in the moment before their deaths. The air was covered in the scent of blood. Breathing felt like I was drinking blood like when I battled the Earth Dragons.

A moment later, it was silent. It was the first time I was glad Nier was a killing machine.

I turned around. Nier didn't kill the leader of the group. She only cut off his right arm. I walked up to his side and whispered to him: "If these are the rules of the slums, I'm happy to abide by them for once..."

I pulled out my handgun from my belt. Yes, I don't kill people and I also hate killing people, but I know that the sentence that follows "an owed debt is a debt that must be paid" is "a life for a life".

Nier's cape was stuck to her body since it was soaked in blood. She wiped her face and then looked at me with the excitement that came from wielding her

sword.

“Are you alright, Nier?”

“I’m so glad. It looks like I really was just too tired.”

Nier wiped her long sword clean and sheathed it. She stepped over the pools of blood, turned around and said: “Thank you, your majesty. It looks like you cured my illness.”

“Huh?”

I was completely bewildered.

She looked at me, bent forward and said: “It’s nothing. Please return to the palace with me to clean ourselves.”

That was the first time I followed Nier’s suggestion, and we quickly left for the palace.

Nier quietly watched my back.

Please don’t hold any hope for me, your majesty. I am but a mere killing machine.

I can protect the children.

But will someone come to my rescue when I’m in trouble?

Being rescued is but a pipe-dream...

Nobody heard her dialogue with herself. Nier started to chase after the silhouette that turned back to look at her.

Chapter 41

What happened after was relatively Mary-sue-like...

I had Andre send guards there to patrol the place. While that area belongs to the fatso, I criticised him in the conference chamber before everyone, saying that he managed the area poorly, disgracing the empire. As such, he had no choice but to let the guards patrol the area.

I used reserved and aggressive means to get the Ali sisters into the palace as maids. The empress is very fussy of who enters the palace. I had to bath with her and sell my body to the empress for a night, plus say “mom, I beg you~” countless times to give them permission to enter. I also had to convince her not to send them to Alice to become Valkyries.

It wasn't so cliché that they'd become my wives, but at least now they don't have to worry about food and shelter.

Nier looked better than the last few days. It's as if she needs to kill people on a set schedule... That's not a good habit. I don't kill every thug I run into. I wouldn't have ordered Nier to kill either had that man not killed Ali's mother.

I have my principles.

Luna placed my clothing to one side, then politely bowed and said: “Your majesty, your clothes have been prepared. You have to rise early tomorrow, so it is better that you do not stay up late.”

“Alright.”

I nodded and finished the glass of fresh milk Luna gave me. Luna walked up to the candle, blew it out and said: “Goodnight, your majesty.”

“Oh right, Luna.”

“Do you have orders?”

“Umm, does Nier say anything to you when you’re together?”

Luna smiled meekly and said: “Miss Gilliante does not speak to me. We live together, but she has not once spoken to me. It seems that Miss Gilliante hates elves.”

Luna’s ears twitched. I laughed and said: “True. I think that part of the reason why she doesn’t like me is because I’m the elf prince.”

“You jest, your majesty. The elf prince must be a pure-bred.”

Luna still doesn’t want to believe me.... She bowed deeply, and then returned to her room.

Nier came in from outside, looked at me and said: “Goodnight, your majesty.”

I closed my eyes and replied: “Goodnight.”

Nier walked pass my bed and into the room as well. There were two people in the room, but it was dead silent as if there was no one in there. Do they really not feel awkward around each other?

I opened my eyes and looked at the moon outside. It’s been half a month since I came here. What have I done in that time? I investigated the currency case, got captured, made guns with the red-haired lady, bought an elf, saw the two factions, accepted the reality that her majesty was my mom, teased Nier... Sigh, did I just throw something strange into the list...?

It’s only been half a month, and yet I’ve done more here than the entire month I was with the elves. No wonder why I’m so exhausted here.

I have to go and see the king of Castor with her majesty tomorrow as well where we’ll prepare to sign the agreement. What surprised me was the fact that the king of Castor was a child who probably wasn’t even ten yet, and so his mother was coming along. It looks like it was his mother who caused Castor to collapse due to her lack of political experience. The empress and her both women, and yet the difference between them is massive.

The empress aside, even my elf mom was able to handle national affairs all the same. I wonder what mom and Lucia are doing right now.

Current time at the elf imperial capital.

“My son still hasn’t returned... He still hasn’t returned... I can’t smell his scent on his clothes anymore... This won’t do... This won’t do... I’m going to die if I don’t see my son... I can’t handle this... Sniff... Sniff... His scent is fading... Should I just go snatch him back...? I shouldn’t have signed that garbage agreement back then... Sniff...”

Lucia silently watched the queen sprawled out on the prince’s bed. The queen had pulled all of the prince’s clothes out and sniffed it while drooling. Lucia sighed.

She wanted to have a sniff too...

“Your majesty. Your Majesty. Good morning.”

The happiest part of my days is when Luna wakes me up with her gentle voice in the morning. She’s a maid, she’s got a nice body, she’s pretty, and she gently wakes me up. That’s got to be the happiest moment in a day for everybody, right? I lazily opened my eyes. The eye-irritating sunrays shone in. The windows were already open. The cool and clear air came in along with the birds’ chirping. Luna stood by the side of the bed with a smile, bowed and said: “Good morning, your majesty. Please rise and change. And please go and see the king of Castor after breakfast.”

“Alright.”

I sat up. I don’t need to move my hands to wipe myself. Luna doesn’t have to either. The two ladies-in-waiting were responsible for it. After getting dressed, I got up and went to the dining hall for breakfast. Nier waited at the door for me throughout the entire process, and followed me to the foreign affairs hall.

“His majesty has arrived.”

“Her majesty has arrived.”

I was surprised to find that mom and I arrived at pretty much the same time. Mom wore a happy look on her face... Yeah, no, not serious. I couldn’t even see

her face... Mom always wears her veil no matter where she goes. She walked up to me, hugged me and said with a smile: "You look very handsome in that robe, son. I might have fallen for you if I were younger... You truly are my son. Let's go, son... Castell!"

"Present."

"Go welcome the king of Castor."

"As you command."

Castell smiled at me and then turned around to leave. The empress hugged me as we entered the foreign affairs hall. The foreign affairs hall as the name suggests is a place for signing documents with foreign countries. The large hall is extremely wide. In the middle is a marble table inlaid with diamonds and pearls. At the top of it was a huge candlestick carved from crystal.

The empress's seat was of course her throne, while the seat beside it was just as extravagant. The hall was like a greenhouse in appearance. Both sides were windows made from coloured glass where the sunrays could shine through, illuminating the interior.

My footsteps echoed in the hall. The empress walked up to her throne, let go of me and checked to see that nobody was on either side. She then lifted her face veil up, gently kissed me on my forehead and said with a smile: "The glory is yours today, son. I won't say anything today. I'll let you and Castell handle all of it."

"Mom! That's a bit..."

"You personally brought Castor under control. How hard can it be to give a signature?"

The empress smiled, rubbed my head and then sat down on her throne. The sound of footsteps from the door could be heard, and the king of Castor and Castell appeared at the door. Behind the king of Castor was a worried looking woman dressed in extravagant clothing. She must be the mother of the blonde kid with freckles. Try as she may to appear domineering and majestic, before the empress's natural dominance and majestic presence, she was as laughable as a clown.

“King of Castor, Fionn Galarett III, and Regent Ms Gallari.”

“Empress of the Rosvenor Empire, Empress Elizabeth Rosvenor. Prince Troy Rosvenor.”

The two of them greet us, and I bowed to pay my respects. The empress however, remained seated on her throne with one leg over the other. She pointed at the desk in front of her and said: “Sit. Castell. Map.”

The two rulers of Castor awkwardly sat down. The small king struggled to keep his head above the table and curiously scanned the empress. You know what they say, kids who’re wet behind the ears aren’t scared of tigers. If it were me, I wouldn’t have the guts to scan the empress in his situation. Castell opened the map and said: “As per the conditions we sent you, Castor will officially become our vassal state. Do you accept our conditions?”

The woman looked at Castell and said: “I believe that your country’s conditions are too harsh. We cannot accept you asking us to disband our navy and army. Our country’s greatest debt is not owed to your country. We can pay our debt by collecting gold and selling land.”

“No, you are mistaken. Your biggest debtors are the five countries of the desert. They already signed an agreement to become our vassal state the day before, and have given the empire the rights to collect all debts. In other words, the empire is your country’s current primary debtor. Should you refuse to sign, you will need to pay the empire that outstanding amount on top of the five chests of silver Castor coins you owe the empire.”

The woman looked at Castell’s contemptuous smile, then at the invoice with the enormous amount he sent her, bit down on her lip hard and said: “The empire’s quick work has surprised me... Whatever. I agree to all your conditions, including disbanding our navy and army, as well as redirecting our debts to the empire. However, Castor’s religions should be respected!”

“That will not be an issue. The empire guarantees that we shall not hinder Castor’s right to practice its religions freely. Further, You also agree to pay the empire’s second and third army platoons to cover their expenses in protecting your country, train the empire’s navy, pay the empire half of your annual income, exempt tariffs for the empire’s exported goods, and to prioritise the

needs of the empire. Do you accept all these conditions?”

“I do...”

“That is great. Please sign here... And stamp it with your national seal. Correct.”

I watched the king of Castor get picked up by his mom, and give his wobbly signature. The servants beside them handed him the seal. The kid took the seal, and placed the fate of his country onto the sheet of paper.

“Thank you for contribution to the people of our nation. Your nation has earned itself the greatest peace... Your majesty...”

Castell took up the seal and pen, and handed it to the empress. The empress waved it off and then said: “Son, you sign it.”

“As you command.”

I nodded. I was very excited. I finally got to sign an agreement where the opposing country had to deal with unfair conditions! I’ve left my name in history and will remain even after I pass on!

Troy Rosvenor, stamped!

“Great. Today, we witness history.”

The empress stood up and smiled with great satisfaction. She walked up to me and said: “I will hold a ball tonight. King of Castor... No, City Master, I’m extending my invitation to you to my ball. A toast to the peace of both our countries.”

“As you command...”

It’s alright... I understand how you feel... But now understand how awesome it felt for warlords back in the day now!

Chapter 42

“Your majesty, your clothes have been prepared. Ah! Your majesty!!”

Luna panicked and knelt down on one knee. The empress waved her hand with a smile and then said: “Rise. I’ve got free time today, so I’ve come to my son’s room to see him and have some tea together.”

“Understood...”

Luna shivered as she stood up. She was at a loss for what to do and stood in place. She still held my clothes I was supposed to wear tonight. I said: “Luna, you can leave once you place my clothes down. It’ll be alright with her majesty and the maids here.”

“Understood.”

Luna placed my clothes down and then turned around to leave. I noticed her legs were weak. It’s normal for people to be scared by the empress when they first see her in person.

The empress picked her cup of tea up and took a sip. She then looked at me and said: “Son, how have you been recently? Has anything felt off?”

The empress lightly placed her hand on mine. Her eyes were filled with concern. No. Her gaze seemed to contain a hint of pain within it. Her hand which was placed on the back of mine was shaking gently. I paused for a moment. The empress didn’t ask me about my health as a casual greeting. She was genuinely worried about me.

“Ah, no... I’ve been well recently....”

“No, that’s not what I meant. What I’m worried about isn’t right now, but...” She looked like she was feeling conflicted. She bit down on her lips and her eyes moved back and forth on the ceiling. She held my hand tightly and gently whispered: “The moon will soon be full.”

“Oh...”

Now I know what the empress was getting at. Mom can't suck out my berserk mana on a full moon night while I'm here, and mom's suggestion was to not resist my own mana. She said that I have to let it out instead. But if I release it then half of humanity's imperial capital would probably...

Alright, here's my next big problem. How am I going to get past the full moon night this month?

I looked at the empress and softly said: “It's alright, mom. I'll... Think of something.”

The empress nodded, pursed her lips and her eyes slowly turned red as tears formed in her eyes. She rubbed her eyes, and with a sobbing voice said: “It's all my fault... If I were a bit braver at the start... If I took you with me back then, then you wouldn't have to suffer so much... I love you... I really, really love you... Seeing you in so much pain, really... I'd rather die....”

Mom couldn't control her tears, and they inevitably ran down her face. Her hands tightly held mine as if I'd disappear if she let go. Her expression showed endless pain. She was like a child in that moment even though she's the empress who's as tough as nails. I don't know what happened back then, but I could feel her heart-shredding pain. She was blaming herself. Perhaps it was her fault that I have to go through this pain every month.

She was in more pain than me. Perhaps mom has been drowning in pain all these years. I believe that she would gladly endure the pain for me if it could somehow be shifted onto her.

I believe that as she's my mom. My elf mom can relieve me of the pain by sucking out my mana, but the powerless empress can only watch her son writhe in pain. Mom must be suffering a lot.

I walked over, knelt before mom and gently hugged her. Mom cried as she held me tightly. She pulled me into her embrace tightly. I could feel the warmth and gentleness of a mother. Mom's tears fell on top of my head. I didn't know what to say either. I have no clue what happened in the past, but having mom hugged me tightly like this was enough.

“Mom, it’s not your fault.”

“S-Son... My son!!”

Mom hugged me tightly and cried loudly. I hugged her back as a weird feeling rose in my chest. I always considered my elf mom my mom, but not the empress. However, when the empress tightly embraced me, I felt a strange feeling of familiarity, grief and sorrow, like that experienced by someone who’d left home and finally returned home to his family. It felt like I’d been held like this by the empress before.

I only know about the war over their son on a surface level, but nothing about the pasts of my moms. People can only be born once. It’s not uncommon for people to say that the father of one is unknown, but right now, it’s my mom who’s unknown. I could feel a feeling of attachment from my elf mom, and a nostalgic feeling from my human mom, both of which left me intoxicated. It’s said that a child can recognise his mother regardless of how long he’s been apart from them. But my body is telling me that they’re both my moms.

What exactly is going on here?

I don’t know how long it took for mom to stop crying. I raised my head, and extended my hand out to wipe away mom’s tears. The empress closed her eyes and let me wipe her face. The corner of her mouth slowly crept up into a smile and she said: “How... How nice would it be if I could always watch over you as you grow...? My husband is no longer with me, but this is the most beautiful time in my life, and you are the greatest gift to me during this beautiful time in my life.”

“Mom...”

“It’s been tough on you, my son. It’s our stubbornness that led to you shouldering this pain. I’ve never had a kid... Nor do I know how to fulfil the role of a qualified mother... I make lots of mistakes, but... But...”

“Mom, you’re already doing very well. You, are a qualified mother...”

I don’t possess the memories of this prince. If this isn’t muscle memory, then I

have no idea what's going on. I don't know what the empress did to me, but I know she loves me. What can you ask of a mother? A mother is a qualified mother as long as she truly loves her child.

At least, mom suffers for the sake of her son.

I stood up and mom gently leaned her head on my chest. She revealed a smile showing her ease and said: "I'm tired too... I have to deal with so many matters every day. If possible, I really want to pass the crown to you, and then become a mother waiting for you to return home every day, cooking for you, doing your laundry, looking after the home and holding you as we sleep at night. We could have a child... Son... and my dear. It feels so similar..."

HOLD UP!!

Are you sure that's something a mother should be doing?!

There's something wrong with both these mothers!! My elf mom adds "onii-sama" when she calls me while she's in her berserk-mode, while the empress before me has started to feel that I resemble her "dear"! Are you two alright?! Please don't displace your gone-love onto your son, okay?!

Mom's gaze started turning strange... I struggled to get out of mom's embrace, then took two steps back and said: "Mom... mom! It'll be nightfall any moment now, so you should get ready for the ball, mom!"

"Oh... Right... Right... You're right... The ball, the ball..."

Mom wiped her eyes, stood up, massaged her face and her majestic look from the other day returned. She cleared her throat gently, finished her cup of tea and then said: "I'll go get ready now. Son, don't be late. Oh, right, I still have a question for you son."

"What is it?"

"Do you have someone you like here after being here for so long? You don't have any girls accompanying you, so you must feel a bit lonely, right? I heard you have a fiancé at the elf nation, so you need one here too."

I shook my head. What sort of logic is that? Please forgive the monogamy views I grew up with, but I can't come to terms with the messy concepts and

views of love you hold here. I'm fine with having Lucia. I don't have any intention of finding myself a princess here.

"Not yet..."

"I see."

The empress nodded and then pulled open the door. Alice and Nier bowed to salute her. The empress left with Alice and Luna came in. She looked at me slightly tense and said: "Your majesty, you should get changed now..."

"Huh? Oh... Sure."

I nodded. I don't know why I was looking at Nier who was standing at the door in a daze.

Chapter 43

The evening party was held in her majesty's favourite palace, and this time, the attendees were those invited by her. It was on a much grander scale than last time. In the distance, the palace was glimmering with golden lights, while the fires brightened up the palace as if it were daytime. Horse carriages were gathered at the door of the palace. It looks like she not only invited major retainers, but also influential figures of this society.

I entered directly via the back door. We needed to make some preparations in the preparation room before the opening dance. Nier didn't dress differently. She wore her military uniform and equipped her long sword as per usual. She had to wait outside in a bit. When I entered the preparation room, her majesty was already there. But, she gave me a big surprise this time.

Mom didn't wear her usual military uniform. She wore an extravagant long skirt instead. Her white dress was stunning like a wedding dress. The jewellery hanging above swayed with each movement she made. Her usual black hair she didn't care for yet dazzled everyone was done up into a bun, and set in place with a hairpin. It was the first time she wore make-up. Her beauty was enough to take people's breath away to begin with, but now, she could sweep them off their feet too. The empress looked at me shyly, smiled and said: "Son, how do I look?"

"Very beautiful..."

Don't blame me for not saying much. You'll be left speechless when you're stunned like me as well.

The empress pursed her lips into a smile, then walked over and held my hand. Her gauze gloves gently teased every inch of my hands. She smiled and said: "I'm really not used to dressing like this. The jewellery and ornaments are heavy. Military clothing is much more comfortable. But, it's your victory party tonight, so I naturally need to pretty up for the occasion. Nier, what do you

think?”

“Very beautiful, your majesty. However, I think that military clothing suits you better.”

“Hahaha, absolutely, I agree. I’ve only worn this sort of clothing twice. Once was on my wedding, and then now. I may have to wear it a third time if my son gets married.”

The empress reminisced over the long skirt she had on, then looked at me and asked with a smile: “Son, do you have a dance partner for tonight’s ball? I can’t dance the opening dance with you today.”

I was stupefied... What?! What?! What?! Aren’t I supposed to dance the opening dance with the empress, and then disappear to one side and enjoy the food?! Why? Why do I need a dance partner?!

“Ah... It looks like you don’t quite understand how balls work, but that’s only normal...” The empress smiled and continued: “I’ll dance the opening dance with you again then. Since you don’t have a girl you like, dancing with me is your best option. But, son, who’s going to help you with your cape?”

“I’ll have Nier help me.”

I remember being told that whoever helps with our cape is considered a favoured retainer. I don’t have any intent of patronising Nier, but I feel like our relationship has eased up a fair bit lately. The number of insults Nier throws my way has drastically decreased. She’s quieter now, but that’s better than her “please kill yourself” request she made at every opportunity.

Our relationship has become less tense since killing that group of thugs.

I asked Nier to help me. It’s more accurate to say that it’s proof of our friendship, than to say that I dote on her. Further, I don’t care if people happen to think that I dote on her. Nier is a Valkyrie and the empress’s bodyguard. There’s nothing wrong with me doting on the empress’s bodyguard as her son. Moreover, the empress would never believe I had plans to revolt.

“As you command.”

Nier nodded and calmly undid her sword hanging on her belt. She didn’t look

like she hated it or was happy. It was just another job to her I suppose. Castell looked at me with delight and then said: “Your majesty, everything is ready. You should prepare to take the stage with his majesty.”

The empress nodded and put her veil on. She then reached her arm out and wrapped it around my arm. She’s my mom, but when I smelt the elegant fragrance on her, my heart rate sped up. I cursed my unexperienced self, and then got dragged into the dance hall like a puppet by the empress.

Ear-destroying claps were heard as I entered. On both sides were countless nobles, influential figures and girls dressed extravagantly. The empress had her veil on as she waved to the people. I don’t think many people have seen her majesty dressed like this. They looked at the empress with disbelief, which finally explained to me why she didn’t want to dance the opening dance with me. And that’s because she’ll forever be the centre of attention for as long as she’s with me, particularly because this party was held for me.

But it doesn’t matter. I’m fine as long as mom is by my side. I’m not used to being in the spotlight anyway. I enjoy the life behind the scenes better. Nier stood behind me and held my cape up in silence. Although her military uniform didn’t really fit with what we were wearing, the empress likes military clothing, so I should respect that as her son.

And thus, the ball commenced. After her majesty finished speaking, I held mom’s hand as we danced. I clumsily tried to dance in beat with her. I never thought her footwork was so good. I didn’t know that a mom who was good at killing and conquering was also good at dancing and ended up happily dancing whatever last time. Since mom dressed differently this time, she naturally put on her best performance.

Mom smiled at me to spoil me as she adjusted her footwork to match my clumsy steps. She didn’t get mad or complain. She just looked at me lovingly, held my hand tightly and moved in circles with me slowly.

The ball officially kicked off after our opening dance. This time however, I wasn’t as fortunate. Not only were there lots of people this time, but I was also the main star of the night. People approached me with flattering smiles even while I was eating to introduce themselves in order to get me to pay attention to

them. Sorry, but I can't...

I don't want to be involved with politics. I want to ensure there's a power-balance in the future, not get involved with your matters. I've only got a month here. Who knows what sort of shit you people could pull in that month. I'm fine as long as I get to eat and play. I won't show up if there's no major matter. That said, I'm the one that saved the people of Castor this time. I was the one that signed the agreement. I felt great when I signed it. I felt a sense of pleasure in being able to determine another's fate.

I looked the smiles of the people in front of me and felt a bit happy. It was the first time in my life I'd been flattered. It feels pretty good. I won't listen to them, but who wouldn't be happy to receive praise.

"Your majesty."

I smiled as I turned around. I saw the mother of the king of Castor walk up to me and raise her glass of wine. I picked mine up and raised mine with a smile as I looked at her. You don't have to thank me. Honest. I just made a tiny contribution. Nothing much.

"You are the hero of the empire."

I smiled as I rubbed my head and said: "No, no."

"Do you feel like you've attained glory now?"

"A little, since I saved Castor after all."

"Saved?!"

She chuckled coldly, then placed her glass down, looked at me and in a low tone said: "What a joke. How did you save us? Is your idea of saving us making us sign that humiliating agreement? Do you think you are a judge? Did we have any other choice but to agree to your terms?! You are the hero of empire. Your so-called save has put a burden onto the shoulders of all of Castor's people. The power you wield really is infinite and cannot be opposed. Not only have you brought pain onto my people, you are enjoying their pain as you stand atop them! You call it negotiation, but in reality, it is just oppression!"

Her veins were showing since she was enraged. She can't touch me here, let

alone slap me. She can't even splash a glass of wine in my face. She paused and then angrily stomped off after flapping her sleeve. I was left there in a daze as if I was in a dream, and at the same, like somebody poured a bucket of cold water on me.

I....

I was happy. I was happy.

I was happy that I forced another country to sign an unfair agreement.

The reason I was happy wasn't because I saved Castor's people from a war, but because it was the first time I forced someone to sign an agreement where the terms imparted on them were unfair. Looking at their expressions made me excited... It... It was the first time I wasn't nervous or scared about signing an agreement. I was like a kid who got his first wand and was excited to turn to transform everything around him.

I was using my power... I wasn't like this! I would've been happy, but not because I signed the agreement. I'd already forgotten my reason for collecting those coins while I stood in the large hall...

Chapter 44

“Your majesty, what are you doing here?”

There were no winds that could blow my cape upwards on the balcony, nor did I have a cigarette that would make it look like I was deep in thought. I only had a glass of red wine in hand. I took little sips of the red wine and felt it pass through my mouth, then down into my gut.

Nier stood behind me and looked at me. Maybe she came to look for me since she didn't see me in the large hall.

“Nothing, just... thinking about some stuff.”

“Alright.”

Nier turned around to leave, but I turned around and called her. She turned around and looked at me blankly. I looked at her with my glass in my hand and didn't utter a word. Nier didn't move. She just stood in place, silently awaiting my orders. The wandering winds blew onto me and lifted Nier's ponytail up and across her green eyes. Her green eyes were gleaming under the moonlight.

“Nier, has our relationship eased up a little recently...?”

Nier looked at me and calmly replied: “It's the same as always.”

I had another sip and then let out a long sigh. After that lecture from the Regent, I came to a realisation. My relationship with Nier hasn't changed her, and we haven't fallen in love with each other after spending time together, but it was because I ordered her to kill like the empress usually does for the first time back at the slums. Nier is most happy when she has her long sword in hand and is completely covered in blood. Nier initially hated my weakness, but that was the first time I ordered somebody to kill.

Nier looked at me and said: “There's nothing we can do about it.”

“Nothing we can do about it?”

“Yes.”

Nier looked at me and continued: “Her majesty bestowed me with a weapon so that I could kill people. I have the rights to kill, so killing is the same as my life. It’s a right. I don’t have any feelings about it.”

I smiled helplessly. Killing people is a right? In my past, I believed that we can’t kill because murder was against the law, and that nobody had the right to take the life of another unless the law deemed necessary, which was why I didn’t kill. I didn’t have the right to kill. But after coming here, I’ve attained the right to kill as well as a tool to kill. It was like I came to that realisation when we are at the slums and therefore gave the order to kill them all.

It truly was as simple as eating or sleeping, just as if I was born the same way. Murder really is just like a mundane task in a day but most people don’t have the right to commit murder. But now I have said right, and I used it. And after I used it, I surprisingly didn’t feel anything. I told myself those men deserved to die, and forgot that the person who should’ve judged them was the law, and not me. I used the power of a prince to kill for the first time.

What’s scarier is that I actually felt happy about it.

My hands were clean because Nier was the one who spilled their blood. It’s more accurate to say that my relationship with Nier was set straight, rather than having eased up. Nier is a killing machine, and I’m the person that has that killing machine. My past self would’ve treated such a weapon as decoration or a toy. I would’ve made Nier lose her life purpose. But when I gave her the order to kill, my relationship with Nier immediately reached its perfect form.

Nier is a weapon and I’m the one who wields that weapon. With the empress behind me, I could open fire wherever I decided and blood would spurt forth like fireworks because that was my right, the right of a prince. All of this belongs to me. The land, the homes and the lives of the people were all mine.

People can’t kill people, not because they can’t, but because they don’t have the right to.

I now have the right. This power is just like the wine in front of me. I wasn’t used to it at first, but I’m intoxicated by it now. This world transformed me the moment I gave the order to kill.

I looked at Nier and asked: “Nier, do you know what the consequences for killing someone is?”

Nier casually replied: “There are no consequences.”

I pointed at myself and asked: “Then what if I killed you now? What would happen to me?”

“You’d get a bit of a lecture from her majesty for spoiling the mood.”

Nier wasn’t scared. She just stood there leisurely. If I were to drop my glass and tell Nier to kill herself right now, Nier would actually use a shard of my glass and slit her throat with it. That, is power. It’s what I now have. I can kill whenever I want. I can force other countries to sign agreements unfair to them. I could even pick a random woman and throw her onto my bed if I chose to. Not only would they not resist, they’d even feel happy and proud about it.

That’s the right and power of a prince. I can overrule the law. I can overrule everything. I now finally understand why people enjoy a carefree and happy life at the risk of destroying their country. It’s like how people smoke despite knowing the harm it brings. Power and wine, intoxicate people and get them hooked the same way tobacco does. You can’t quit once you experience it.

I’m glad I’ve come to understand this. Otherwise, I’ll end up using this damn excuse to numb myself each time and get Nier to kill. Nier would be very happy that way, and there will finally come a day where I drink a glass of wine mixed with blood. No, it’ll be worse. The empress wouldn’t restrain me and I’d become a tyrant. I’d even pursue power here and forget all about the elves.

I don’t know how many glasses of wine I had, but my mind was still blank, or rather I’ve just come to my senses. I only felt giddy about ordering Nier to kill and stamping the agreement with the seal because I was drunk.

I turned around, looked at the bright-light city and gently called: “Nier...”

Nier, from behind asked: “What is it?”

“I think I was wrong... Maybe I was too weak in the past.”

“It’s not too late to realise it now.”

I clenched my teeth and smiled weakly. My power has become like a plug-in

over here. Isn't it always the case that dimensional travellers have some sort of cheat skill? My identity after my dimensional travel must be my cheat skill, which has allowed me to enjoy all of this, as well as my right and power to carry out acts of brutality. I can't let go of these things. I can only accept this power.

But that's not a problem. Power is a good thing. It's just that it needs to be caged. It's good that I understand that now. I know that I have the power and right to kill people, but I won't kill people on a whim. I know I have the right and power to kill, so I won't stop Nier from drawing her sword when I'm in a pinch from now.

My moral standards from before aren't my bottom line, but merely an attitude for carrying out tasks. My previous morals were handcuffs on me, but it's now my scabbard. I'll use my morals to decide whether or not I should kill, but I won't let it hinder my decisions.

"I'll order you to kill a lot more from now."

"Understood."

Nier went back. When she returned, she brought with her a bottle of wine and a glass. She poured herself a full glass and then stood to my side. She knocked the glass of red wine back like it was water expressionlessly.

Nier is not a good drinking companion. She didn't utter a word and her expression never changed regardless of how much she drank, as though she was a block of ice. Regardless of how much she drank, she was still cold deep down. You can't enjoy a drink with her as your companion.

But she puts me at ease.

What I didn't know was that Nier was thinking about a lot of things just as I was that night.

Chapter 45

My head was hurting like crazy when I woke up the next day. It was probably a hangover. I rolled over.

Luna hasn't called me up yet today. Well, don't wake me up then. I feel like crap today. I just want to lie in bed all day.

Everything has been solved. This is all I can do with humanity. I'm not feeling too good, but the matter with Castor is over. My relationship with Nier is doomed to remain tense, so that means everything to do with me and humanity is done and dusted.

I'll just kick back and relax now. Oh, wait, I can still go hang out at the red-haired lady's place and play with the kids too. But with the safety conditions there, I wonder if the kids can still run around like before.

Luna came in with a basin of water, looked at me with a smile and said: "Good morning, your majesty. You do not look too well. You probably had too much to drink yesterday."

I rubbed my throbbing head and in a weak voice said: "Yeah. I've got a headache..."

"Please take a bite of this fruit. It's similar to mangosteen, but doesn't have a shell. It's more like apple skin and feels like an apple to the touch too."

Luna had a naughty smile on her face, so I realised there was probably something off about it.... I took a sniff. There were no problems. It had the faint aroma of fruit. There shouldn't be anything wrong with this fruit which is like an apple, right?

I forgot an important fact. Even apples can be sour. I could imagine how contorted my scrunched up face looked after I bit down into it. It was so sour my tears were coming out. I'd crap my pants laughing if I could see my face right now.

“Pfft...”

Luna who stood to a side pursed her lips tightly and avoided looking at me. I know she wanted to laugh but didn't dare to. I sat up quickly and spat it out, picked up a cup of water and drank a few mouthfuls to erase the sour taste. I gasped for air and angrily looked at Luna. Luna was fighting for dear life to keep her lips pursed, while her body was shivering from holding in her laughter. I sighed and said: “Fine, go ahead and laugh.”

“Pfft... Your... Your... Majesty! Hahahaha... S-... Sorry... Hahaha!!”

Luna burst out into laughter. She was holding her stomach with her hand and wiping her tears with the other. She took two steps back and continued laughing. I smiled to myself helplessly when I saw her bright smile. My most proud accomplishment here is saving Luna. Luna now had red cheeks and she could finally laugh without worry.

I can light up her world regardless of how dark her past was.

It's easy to rob someone of their happiness. But trying to give someone happiness is overwhelmingly difficult.

Luna finally finished laughing. She wiped her tears, pat her face, then politely smiled at me again and asked: “I... I am sorry... Your Majesty... Haha... Hmm. But do you feel a bit better now?”

You don't say. It really works. My mind was now blank. My headache and lethargy went away in an instant. I've never felt so awake before. It looks like I need to prepare this stuff often in future. One bite, and your hangover is gone. But to be fair, you can only handle one bite. I guiltily looked at Luna who brought me a plate of the fruit. Are you positive it's for curing my hangover and not killing me?

“Ah... Good morning, your majesty.”

As I was doing up the buttons on my shirt, Nier came in looking a bit out of it. Her voice was evidently weak. I looked at her and recalled that the two of us finished four or five bottles of red wine last night and then sat on our asses on

the balcony. I don't have a clue how I got back. Nier must be feeling sick too...

Wait a second!

I adjusted the expression on the lower part of my face, looked at Nier and asked: "Nier, you don't look too good. Do you have a hangover?"

"It was my mistake for not controlling myself last night."

Nier lowered her head to apologise, then raised her head and said: "However, it won't affect my swordsmanship. Please don't worry, your majesty."

"But it's not a good idea for you to go out when you're not feeling well, is it? And further, it was I who told you to drink last night. This fruit can cure hangovers, I personally tried it myself."

I don't think humans know about the fruit elves use to cure hangovers, do they...? I picked up a purple fruit and handed it to Nier. I could force Nier to eat it, but that'd be boring. I wanted to see Nier's look when she scrunches up her face. I guess this can be considered a prank.

But it really does cure hangovers, so I guess not?

Nier accepted the fruit, then bowed and said: "Thank you, your majesty. I won't stand on ceremony then... Ka-chik."

I noticed the slow but evident change in Nier's expression after she took a bite. Her hand that was holding the fruit squeezed it as if she were trying to crush it to pieces. Her body shivered. Even her sword on her waist shook. Just as I was about to laugh, a tear fell down her face due to the sourness, but she wore no expression as always.

Nier's tears ran down her face even though she was expressionless as she chewed that fruit which would bring people to their knees and then swallowed it.

I was stunned as I watched her take a second bite, and then a third bite, until she ate the entire thing.

Nier's tears continued running down her face but she didn't utter a word. That sourness must've killed her. Surely. I know because I couldn't stand it after one bite, while Nier ate the whole thing. I initially planned to laugh after she got

caught by surprise and spat it out, but I can't laugh now.

Even Luna looked at her completely dumbfounded.

Nier licked the juice of the fruit off her hand, then raised her head and took a deep breath. She suppressed her quivering and struggled to say in a calm tone: "Thank you, your majesty. I feel much better now. So what are the plans for today?"

"What plan?! You must feel sick!! Luna! Bring water here!!"

"Ah! Right away!!"

I clumsily took the cup of water handed to me and shoved it into Nier's hands. Nier looked at the cup, gave it back to me and then said: "This is your cup, your majesty."

I shoved the cup back into Nier's hands before providing an explanation. I then looked at her diffidently and said: "Who cares whose cup it is right now?! Wasn't it sour to you?! You can just spit it out if it's sour! There's no need to make yourself suffer!!"

It was awkward, like when you crack a joke not knowing that you hurt the person in question.

Nier raised her head but didn't touch the cup. She instead raised the cup up high and poured it into her mouth. She placed the cup down, wiped the corner of her mouth and tears. She then looked at me and said: "That's because you gave it to me, your majesty. I'd finish it even if it was poison."

"...."

I'm speechless.

That's just how Nier is. She's her majesty's Valkyrie and my bodyguard. We're not friends. When I said "joke", I was referring to your circle of friends. Nier takes everything I say seriously which means I can't crack jokes with her.

"Let's go. We need to go to the industrial street today."

"Understood."

I don't know if Nier's hangover is gone or not, but she looks a lot better now. I

sighed to myself. I felt slightly bad for Nier, but there was nothing I could do.

After looking at Nier for a while, I let out a heavy sigh, put on my coat and left. It's bound to be a peaceful day today, but the start to the day has left me somewhat bitter.

Chapter 46

“What’s the situation on the Black Streets been like lately?”

“There’s a huge debt owed to me, and I can’t get it back, but we still need to buy all the firearms. I’m stuck with this batch of goods! Nobody buys the swords, armours, and saddles we make either. We’ve had to lower the price of military equipment down so low we’re just breaking even.”

“Couldn’t they be sold to other countries previously?”

“Soldiers from the army are patrolling the Black Streets all the time now. They’ve arrested a fair number of people. We’ve had to stop selling to avoid the heat!”

“Soldiers? Isn’t Kurt responsible for the soldiers? Can’t you talk to him about it?”

“It was the prince’s order! The prince personally passed down the order! And the prince goes to the Black Streets every day. We don’t have a spare moment to catch our breath!”

“Where’d this prince come from...? How come I’ve never seen him before?”

“I’m not sure. The prince brought Castor down in one stroke. The empress really dotes on him too. We can’t touch him. And we can’t assassinate him even if we want to because his bodyguard is the Valkyries’ sword instructor. Even if we were to hire assassins, we’d probably need at least two hundred of them.”

“Yeah, if we anger the empress... We’re all dead meat... Why do we need to kill the prince?! Why not just bribe him? If we can bring him to our side then the problem is solved.”

“You think we can bribe the prince with the amount of wealth that we have? The prince’s wallet is the empire’s national treasury! What’s more is that the prince has nothing he particularly likes. He doesn’t like women, he doesn’t like money. He just likes going to the Black Streets every day. What would we gift

him?”

“Just kill him then. How about bribing a servant close to him to poison him?”

“That’s impossible. His close servant is an elf he saved. There’s no way she’d help us. The prince is a half-blood. He’s half-elven. It’s said that the war ten years ago started and ended because of him.”

“Cough. Cough.”

The fire inside the secret room swayed. Near a dozen people wearing black cloaks were debating at a huge stone table, which was situated in the middle of the secret room. The room built from bluestone bricks was covered with moss and lichens. The figure of a fat person cut everybody’s conversation off and got them to end their debate. They all turned to look at the fat figure. He extended his hand out and placed it on the table. His fingers which were like lotus roots projected a shadow which covered the jewellery and gold on the table.

“The prince’s existence is bad news for all of us. When he brought down Castor, the prices of Castor’s goods all dropped. We merchants who’ve had a monopoly on these goods can’t continue maintain the prices. However, he’s still a valuable asset. As long as he lives, we can use him to instigate another large scale war. Aren’t you all worried about overstocking weapons?”

“Only the elves could put up a fight against the empire if it were such a large scale war. Further, the elves have maintained a friendly relationship with humans for ten years already.”

The fatso snickered and said: “There’s no friendly relationship between the two countries. Does the empress truly like the elves? She just doesn’t have a choice. Just as you mentioned, the prince is a half-blood. He only comes every second month, so where is he the other month? Of course he’s with the elves. Her majesty treats his majesty as her greatest treasure. If the war back then was started because of his majesty, then there’s no reason a second one can’t be instigated with him as the catalyst. If the prince dies while he’s with the elves, then not only is it unrelated to us, the empress will even attack the elves out of despair. She’ll even personally take to the frontlines. If that happens, is there a need for us to be worried about excessive inventory? When that happens, we’ll return to the golden era when her majesty was conquering the

lands.”

“But, how do we get the prince killed when he’s with the elves?”

“We have friends among the elves.”

He pulled his chair out, stood up and then said: “I’ll go make the arrangements. You people behave. Be patient for now and don’t do anything illegal. It might be tough to sell your goods, but it’s not affecting your livelihood, is it? Don’t reveal our plans beforehand. Leave the prince alone, got it?”

“Understood.”

“Alright, then let’s leave.”

I stepped over a puddle of dirty water and headed to the red-haired lady’s workshop with Nier. The candy pouch Nier had on her belt had been refilled. The candy stand man had already died so I had to make a long trip to buy the candy. Nier’s expression was a lot more relaxed now. The sweetness of the candy must’ve suppressed that sour taste that’d leave people drowning in despair.

“Big sis! Big bro!!”

When we got to the front of the workshop, the children gleefully gathered around us. Nier leaned over with a smile as she scrubbed their heads, and then asked: “There’s no one missing today, right?”

“No! The soldiers have protected us day and night!”

One of the boys looked at Nier, excitedly raised his hand with a wooden sword in it and said: “The soldiers are so cool. I want to become a famous soldier in the future too! I want to be cooler than you, big sis!”

I laughed and looked at Nier. Nier gently looked at him and scrubbed his head with a smile. She then said: “Make sure to work hard then. You need to be brave, loyal and strong to be a soldier.”

“Uhm! I’ll give it my all! Ali got taken into the palace. I want to enter the palace and become a guard too!” He waved his wooden sword around with style and looked like he knew what he was doing. I couldn’t believe he’d picked up some sword skills. His hand movements showed that he knew what he was

doing. The children who stood on the side were wowed and clapped.

Nier smiled and clapped as well. Yeah, that kid was more skilled with a sword than I was.

He proudly put his sword away, then looked at me and asked with admiration: “Big bro!! Big bro!! Do you know swordsmanship?”

I rubbed my nose since I felt awkward. I then said: “I don’t. I’d carry a sword with me if I could... But I can’t use a sword at all...”

“What can you do then, big bro?”

The kids looked at me with a hint of disappointment. Their looks of disappointment made me feel worse than the looks of contempt Nier gave me... Why are you all so disappointed? I don’t know swordsmanship. They don’t teach it in the military. Why did I feel guilty like I committed some sort of mistake? I rubbed my nose and awkwardly said: “I... I know military boxing and military wrestling...”

“Spar with big sis then! Come on! Come on! Big sis!”

They pulled Nier up and she looked at me with a serious look.

Hey, hey, hey!! You’re my bodyguard!! Why did you let the children goad you into fighting me?! I did say I know military boxing and wrestling but I treat it like radio calisthenics! You want me to use radio calisthenics to fight with someone who kills people?!

Nier placed her sword down and looked at me with clenched fists. I helplessly smiled. The guard stance for military boxing and wrestling is...

Uhm. What I saw the next moment were the buildings and sky above me...

Nier didn’t use force. She completely guarded against my attack. Her fist beautifully caught me in my gut, and when I leaned over, I got struck with an uppercut, which knocked my torso upright and me onto the ground...

“Please forgive me, your majesty!!”

Nier quickly went down on one knee before me... Shouldn’t you be helping me up and not kneeling right now...?

I shook my head the way you would after getting stunned by a shot to the head. Nier didn't use force. I used the wall as support to stand up, then looked at Nier, waved my hand and said: "It's fine. Rise. Did you see that... Eh?"

I saw the children look at me with their terrified eyes. They were so scared they didn't dare to move. What's the matter? Didn't I just lose...? Did I happen to unleash some wicked punch or something?!

"Y-Y-You're... Your majesty..."

The eldest kid quickly knelt down, prostrated himself on the ground and shouted aloud: "I am very sorry, your majesty!!"

The other children quickly followed suit.

"Huh? Oh right..."

I finally understood why they were scared. I helplessly smiled, crouched down and helped the kid at the forefront up, and said: "Relax, relax. Just act like you always do. I'm really happy when I'm around you all. You don't have to act like that because of my identity. You haven't done anything wrong either, so relax."

Still quivering, he raised his head and asked me with disbelief: "Ar-Are you sure...? We... Can play with you, your majesty?"

"Yeah. Haven't we been playing together for a long time already?"

I smiled and scrubbed his head. I then stood up and they did too. They looked at me with fear. I extended my hand out and Nier was unsure what was going on. I looked at Nier and said: "Candy..."

"Ah..."

Nier handed me the small pouch. I held the candy and teased them for a bit. I leaned over with a smile and said: "Your's. Enjoy. Enjoy it..."

"You guys ate my bread to, so we're friends from now. Don't worry about a thing."

I gave them all a candy-ball and then returned the pouch to Nier. The children finally eased up and revealed their smiles when they saw the candy. Kids are easy to cheer up. If Nier was like them, then our relationship would probably be really good by now.

“Nier, I’m heading in first.”

Nier nodded and replied: “Understood.”

I turned around, brushed the dirt off myself, then knocked on the door and entered the workshop.

Glossary

*Black Street(s) = An area where there is poor safety standards and lots of fights

Chapter 47

“You look a bit down today, prince, did someone try to kill you on the way here? Don’t come here if that’s the case. What would I do if you ruined my place?”

“No, I was just playing with the children for a bit. But what you said hurt me. I thought we were friends, but you’re more concerned about your shop than me.”

“Hahahahaha!”

The red-haired lady laughed in a heroic tone. She picked up the alcohol bottle by the side and gulped a few mouthfuls. She then wiped her mouth and said: “Yeah, that’s right. I’m quite proud to have become friends with you too, your majesty. But you have to consider it from my perspective, because I built this workshop piece by piece. Everything in here was created by me. Everything in here has me to thank, not you or the empress. I can help you out of friendship, but that doesn’t mean that I have to sacrifice everything for you.”

“You’re right. You’re right.”

I impatiently waved my hand and then sat down, and said: “You smoked again, didn’t you? Didn’t I tell you there was gun powder over here? If you don’t want to get burnt up with your workshop, go smoke outside or make another room.”

“Prince, you’re even fussier than my mom. If I had to go outside every time I wanted to smoke, I must as well live outside. And where would I find the money to make another room? It doesn’t matter, it doesn’t matter. I won’t ignite the gunpowder, don’t worry. Oh, right. I’ve finished the gun you asked for. Here.”

She bent down and grabbed a gun leaning on the wall, handed it to me, and then picked up her pipe. I ran my hand over the gun. The gun was really heavy, but there was nothing that could be done about it. Plastic doesn’t exist in this

world. To be able to make this gun is a pretty decent accomplishment. Lucia can control wind which is why I didn't design for there to be an air pump. However, I've already managed to give it the ability to fire consecutively. As long as one can create an air pump, they'll be able to fire steel balls like a machine gun.

The gun had rifling done too. If it were to fire steel balls... It's probably not the best idea to tune it so that it can put holes in peoples' bodies. There are no wars here, so a bit of brutality probably isn't going to matter. I pushed the door open and looked at the height of the building. I then asked: "Can I make a rather ridiculous request? Umm, can you make a chimney higher than this?"

She took a puff from her pipe, then looked at me dumbfounded and said: "If I had the money to make a pillar that high, wouldn't I have enough to make another room? You sure know how to crack jokes, your majesty. If you want to get it done, then you'll need to use your wealth and power as royalty to find a place to get it built. But do you mind me asking what you're trying to do?"

"I want to make lead bullets. If lead comes down from that height, its liquid form will automatically become spherical in shape, however... Since you can't make it, I'll just have to trouble you with making lead bullets then. As for the dimensions, can you make them the same as these steel balls?"

"Okay, okay, okay. But I don't think I can make many. It would've been great if I had access to such a convenient method like the one you described, because my handiwork rate is very slow. And prince, a full moon is approaching. As a half-blood, don't cause some big incident while you're here with humans."

"I know. I won't cause trouble... Oh, yeah, when will there be a full moon?"

"The moon will be full tomorrow night. The elves will have another sleepless night again. Are you ready for it, your majesty? Oh, yeah, I'm a bit curious about how you react on a full moon night, your majesty. The libido of elves tends to rise to incredible levels on that day. You better not lay your hands on some maid and have an illegitimate child or else it'll become a huge issue."

I smiled weakly. As if I have those sorts of thoughts at a time like that. I mean,

there's not a single spot on my body that doesn't hurt when it kicks in. It feels like somebody is ripping my bones out of my body. But I have witnessed the part about elves having elevated libido levels during full moons... If mom had lost her mind, I probably would've been done in already.

I couldn't see Lucia that time. What would Lucia be doing in a corner where I can't see her...?

No! I shouldn't think about that. All I'm thinking about are eroge* plots. I returned the rifle to its place. I don't want to walk around with a long gun on me. This sort of stuff should be kept secret. I can't let people see it. I'll wrap it up properly and take it with me when I leave. I stood up and said: "I'll be off then. Thank you, big sis."

"Huh? Are you leaving already? Aren't you going to leave me with anything today?"

Are you hoping to pry my brain again? Sorry, but I'm not an encyclopedia... I can't just draw blueprints at the drop of a hat for you. The number of blueprints I can remember are limited too. If I show you anymore, I'll have to show you assault rifles. I smiled weakly and said: "I don't have an infinite number of ideas to share either. This should be plenty, right...? And if it were up to me, I'd suggest researching bullets instead of rifles."

"Yes, yes. What you say makes sense, your majesty. I won't see you out, bye your majesty. I hope you have a beautiful night, especially tomorrow night."

What a thoughtful wish... I still don't even know if I'll make it through tomorrow night in one piece. I sighed. Nobody here can help me suck my mana out, and neither can I use magic. I'll probably die from the pain. It's such a nuisance without my elf-mom by my side.

I saw Nier holding a small wooden sword as she taught the young boy swordsmanship as soon as I exited the workshop. Nier held the small wooden sword with one hand and took a firm stance. The young boy tried his best to hit Nier, but Nier easily deflected all his attacks. In fact, she didn't even move her feet.

"Your majesty!"

“You’re open!”

When Nier turned around, the young boy shouted and swung at Nier who wasn’t looking. Nier easily deflected his attack without even looking, and simultaneously attacked his wrist, thus disarming him.

“You’re so good, big sis! You’re so good! You’re stronger than the prince!!”

The children surrounded Nier and were evidently surprised, and complimented her using words that hurt me. Nier smiled and crouched down. She stroked the kid’s head and she said: “Not bad. You have the basics of swordsmanship. Does someone at home practice swordsmanship?”

“Yeah!” The young boy nodded resolutely and then happily said: “My older brother learns swordsmanship! He’s going to challenge the people in the palace next. I heard that you could be conferred a position of an official if you can defeat someone there! I’ll definitely go there once I’ve mastered the sword too!”

“No!! You are not to go!!”

Nier’s sudden angry shout scared me. I looked at Nier surprised. Even the kids got scared as they looked at Nier fearfully. The boy retreated two steps out of fear and looked at Nier while trembling. Nier was aware that she shouted at him and went silent for a moment. She then softly said: “Sorry... I shouldn’t have shouted at you... It’s just... it’s just... Don’t ever... Don’t ever take part in that challenge... It’s impossible to succeed. It’s impossible...”

“Big sis...”

As soon as he called her, Nier quickly pulled him into her embrace.

“Promise me. Promise me that you’ll never participate in that challenge. Don’t ever go there, even if you starve to death...” Nier paused. She looked ahead of her in a daze lost for words. She’s a Valkyrie. Everything she had, from food, water and living was provided by the empress. She doesn’t have a salary. She’s a poor child, but can she save these kids from starvation?

The boy leaned on Nier’s shoulder and stared at me.

I smiled helplessly and walked over. I touched him on his head lightly and

softly said: “Listen to big sis. If your family is struggling, come to the palace gate and hand this handkerchief to the guards, and then report to me. If I’m not there, just hand this handkerchief to the guards and let them know that I told you to come and grab some food. Trust me, you can exchange this handkerchief for white bread.”

I pulled my personal handkerchief out and handed it to him. I then looked at all the children and said: “You’re all my friends. Whenever you run into trouble, just come to the palace. But remember; always hold the belief that the world is benevolent, regardless of how sad you may feel. Don’t forget your dignity and kindness even if you starve.”

The children looked at me. They looked at each other at a loss for what to say or do, and then nodded.

I rarely saw those children afterwards, and even forgot how they looked. Maybe they became one of the men by my side. Maybe they became a blacksmith that made one of the weapons I wielded. Maybe they became scholars, or maybe they were still struggling to get by. Whatever the case, I believe that they were all kind.

Glossary

*Eroge = Erotic Games

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Chapter 48

(Added Chapter)

After I just finished lunch at noon and didn't know where to go, mom came to the outer court and sent everybody else away. She held my hands and was clearly concerned when she said: "Son, the moon will be full tonight."

I smiled and said: "It's alright, mom. I'll hang in there."

"I don't want to let you fight it... Son, I don't want to see you in pain... It... really hurts. I know you don't want to destroy this place, but... I don't want to see you tie yourself up either..."

"It's alright, mom, it's alright."

I know how I handled it last time now. That's cruel. I tied myself up to my bed. I was in so much pain I was ready to die yet couldn't move. I could only quietly lie on the bed and wait for the moon to go down. I admire my original self. What a true man. I wanted to smash my head and be done with it after just a few minutes, yet he was able to hold out until sunrise.

Mom pulled me into her embrace and my head was entrapped between her soft valleys again. Mom lightly pat me on my back and in a sobbing tone said: "Son, I can't hide it from you anymore. You're innocent. You should've been a happy boy. This is all my fault. I was too stubborn and weak at the time. Son, after tonight, I'll tell you what happened in the past." The empress gently cupped my face and kissed me on my forehead. She then stood up and walked out looking quite tired.

Can't you tell me now?!

Luna came in after the empress left. It looked like something was wrong. She looked at me and moved her lips. Her eyes shifted swiftly. I was silently eating some sweets the empress brought with her. These sweets are really good. I didn't notice Luna's abnormality, but I soon will be abnormal....

“Luna... Bring water...”

The sweets were nice but they were really dry... It took a moment before Luna reacted and brought me a cup of water, I chugged the water, then frowned and asked: “Luna, is something troubling you?”

“Ah... Yes... Sorry, your majesty.”

Luna looked at me and hesitated for a moment before saying: “Your majesty, I want to know what exactly will happen with you on a full moon night. Why do you tie yourself up...? Sorry... Sorry, your majesty. I... I did not mean to eavesdrop... Sorry!”

I waved my hand, looked at Luna and said: “It’s fine... It’s nothing important... It’s just... Yeah... Well, basically, my mana goes berserk... I think that’s what it’s called.”

“Your mana goes berserk?!” Luna was surprised. She then pressed her hands to her chest and said: “That... That... That is an incurable disease for elves... Because if their mana goes berserk... They cannot come into contact with elven water... It is fine for them to drink it, but when they wash, they would turn into stone, right...?”

I smiled helplessly and replied: “Yeah... Why’s that?”

“It is because your mana is disordered at its most basic form... And you should also be aware that mana concentration levels will go from low to high. The water in the elven territory is granted by the gods. It is the place with the purest mana. The flow of mana flows through a normal elf’s body, allowing them to control it, and not be affected by the mana in the water. However, your mana is disordered and cannot be controlled. This causes the mana in the water to try and suck it out. The body of elves also require a supply of mana. A body without mana is the same as a body without blood. You could essentially say that you are dead when you are in water.”

Oh, she must mean becoming a vegetable I imagine... I know what that feels like because I’ve experienced it more than once. That means that I’m fine with being in water here not because I’ve got something applied on my body, but because the water doesn’t contain mana.

Luna looked at me and said: “Mana going berserk is a very rare condition for elves... No... I should say that the cause is simple to identify, but it is rare to chance upon...”

“Incest?”

I remember my elf mom married her older brother and gave birth to me. That older brother that should be sent to see an orthopaedic in Germany and my elf-mom with a severe bro-con tendency got married and gave birth to me afterwards. It sounds like not only are children born through incestuous relationships prone to genetic diseases a fact that holds true for humans, but also applicable for elves.

“No...”

Luna shook her head, then looked at me and said with disbelief: “It is due to transfusing a large volume of blood... And it would have to be a case where more than half of a person’s blood is transfused. The person’s original blood and the blood that carries mana come into conflict with each other which leads to mana going berserk... In other words..., you once had a large volume blood transfusion... There are no kids that are born with the condition where their mana goes berserk. Normally, an elf who loses half his blood would already be dead... So, it is basically impossible to have that condition... The only time and examples where that happened were back in the days in cruel black magic experiments...”

I was stunned. No way. I remember mom told me that my mana going berserk was a condition I had since I was a child. Did I get a blood transfusion as a kid? Who did I get a blood transfusion with? And elves can transfuse half a person’s blood at once?

“Are you positive?”

I looked at Luna. I didn’t completely buy her story. It’s not that I don’t believe Luna, but I’m seemingly an exception to the rule so...

“I... I do not know too much... Because...blood transfusions and the such...are only done by dark elves... For us...it is a taboo...”

Luna looked at me while trembling and begged: “Your majesty, I beg you,

please do not make me mention black magic... Mentioning black magic is blasphemy..."

"Don't you feel that my existence is blasphemy then?"

"You are half-blooded... Perhaps that is why your mana goes berserk..."

What Luna mentioned and my current situation is completely different. She said the elven prince must be a pure-blood, while I'm a half-blood. Mana going berserk is a condition that derives from blood transfusions. It can't possibly be innate, while I was born with the condition. This completely contradicts Luna's knowledge. I don't think Luna would lie to me because ignorance and lying are different. Luna shared with me what she knew, but it looks like our knowledge conflicts with each other.

Luna looked at me and asked again: "So, your majesty, what happens to you on full moon nights?"

I smiled meekly, touched my head and said: "I don't really know how to describe it. My whole body hurts on full moon nights... And I get really irritable like I'm going to explode."

Luna nodded, then nervously looked at me and said: "That is mana going out of control... Your mana is disordered which must be why it goes out of control on full moon nights. If it is not treated, it will cause your body to explode... However, your mana is not as concentrated as royalty..."

"I told you I'm the elf prince..." I maintained my meek smile and continued: "How do you know so much, Luna...?"

"I... I have already been sacrificed to the shrine... I would not have been captured here had it not been for the war fifteen years ago..."

Luna sighed, then looked at me and said: "Your majesty, if you do not mind, I will help you suck your mana out tonight. That will ease your pain a bit."

"No! No! No!!"

I remember how mom did it last month and resolutely rejected her.

"No... I did not mean that I wanted to have intercourse with you, your majesty... But if you do not release it, your mana really will go berserk. You

could potentially destroy the imperial capital if your mana goes out of control and you release it.”

Luna waved her hand, lowered her head and softly said: “I know my place... I know what I have been through... I know... I know it all... Your majesty, please believe me! I do not have any ulterior motives. I merely... I merely do not wish for you to suffer... That is all.”

Luna’s body shivered a little. She lowered her head and I couldn’t see her face, but I could tell from her tone that she was sobbing.

“Only her highness could suck away that berserk portion of your mana. I have tried before. Just licking your lips will hurt as if my organs were being torn apart. I remember I was in so much pain I passed out that night.”

Not even Lucia was able to handle the berserk portion of my mana. How much pain would Luna be in if she were to suck it out. I wouldn’t reject her if she could suck it out without having to deal with any consequences. But just licking will put her in so much pain she’d pass out. I’m afraid Luna would die if she sucks it all out.

“It’s fine, Luna. Just tie me up tonight. It’d be nice if there was a drug that could knock me out. I don’t think you can handle my berserk mana, so don’t worry about it. I can get through it this time if I got through it last time.”

I smiled, extended my hand out and scrubbed her head. I then stood up and looked at the flower garden outside the window. I chuckled softly and said: “I have to return to the elves soon. You should pack. I’ll take you home. Your home is with the elves. I have a responsibility to send you home.”

“.....”

A gentle voice responded to me from behind. A pair of arms gently wrapped themselves around my waist. I stood still in place. The warm touch on my back was lightly moist. From behind and while choking on her tears, Luna softly said: “Thank you... Your majesty... Sorry... Your majesty...”

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Chapter 49

What timing. My body started hurting right after dinner when the sun just went down. I deliberately drank lots of alcohol at dinner to try and get myself drunk so as to relieve myself of some of the pain. But in the end, it was like all the alcohol vanished into a void and I was awake as if I was on stimulants.

Far out. Have I no choice but to put up with the pain?

I struggled to crawl into bed. Nier walked up to me with a rope and looked at me, then bowed and said: "Sorry, your majesty."

"Hurry."

I clenched my teeth and with my last ounce of sanity, stopped myself from getting up. I was feeling extremely irritated. I wanted to destroy everything around me, and kill every living thing around me. I think I'll have a mental breakdown if I don't tie myself up.

Nier tied me up tightly to the bed. My arms, legs and even neck were tied up. If I tried to lift my head up, I'd end up strangling myself. Nier is great at tying people up. After a few circles and knots, I could only move my head. Nier noticed I had a bunch of cloth in my hand. She hesitated for a moment before exiting.

The pain slowly began to spread throughout my body. The pain inside me which felt like it was going to explode and find a way to escape outside ravaged my insides. I wanted to be strong and not cry out, but after just five minutes, I couldn't put up with it. I roared loudly and struggled with all my might to move my immobilised body. I knew that crying out was futile, but the energy I released through my cries relieved me of the pain somewhat.

I never thought I could cry and shout like this. As a matter of fact, I never thought a human being could cry out in such a way that all one's hairs would stand up. It was so embarrassing for a guy to cry out like that. However, that

was the only thing which could slightly relieve me of the pain.

My mind broke under the pain a lot quicker than I estimated. It was about an hour in, when a ray of light from the moon shone in under the hem of the curtain that I lost my conscious.

Everything I could feel afterwards was gloomy. The pain from my body vanished and turned into rage. I wanted to get up and destroy the world. I wanted to kill everyone. I wanted to destroy everything. None of this was meant to exist. Everything I don't want should be destroyed, and all those who disobey me should be turned to ash.

However, the rope tied around my neck stopped my movements. I desperately tried to raise my head but the rope choked my neck which caused me to instinctively lie back down. I bled due to the friction of my body rubbing against the rope. The scent of blood further fuelled my madness. I could no longer tell if the groans I was making were that of a human or a wild beast.

Kill me! Kill me! Kill me! Kill me!!

This hurts... This hurts like hell... It hurts like hell... All the veins in my body expanded. My eyeballs were ready to pop out of my head. My nose was bleeding and my mouth was filled with the taste of blood. It seemed like my teeth themselves were bleeding. I desperately cried and wanted to escape the restriction of the rope. I wanted to kill. I wanted to rip everybody before me apart. I wanted to bath myself in blood. I wanted a world where only I existed!!!

“AAAHHH!!!!”

The empress knelt before the door and pressed herself against it firmly. Her tears were running down her taut face. She grabbed the exquisite wooden door with her fingers so tightly she could've left marks on them. She bit down on her lips and the blood from her lips mixed with her tears coming from her eyes, and ran down onto her military clothing.

Nier stood at the end of the corridor with her hand firmly on her sword handle. The Valkyries had the outer court surrounded and everybody was forbidden from approaching it. Valkyries were patrolling every floor and all the servants were locked underground.

Alice gently rubbed the empress's back and softly said: "Your majesty..."

"I... I... This hurts me so much..."

The empress was sitting on the floor. She grabbed her chest tightly with her right hand and pulled off the golden buttons on her clothing, and clenched them in her hand. Tears from her eyes didn't cease for a moment. The empress who had lost her majestic and domineering aura a good while ago was in despair and pain, just like a girl who'd lost her beloved husband.

Alice quietly watched her empress, who was fearless before an army five times larger than her own was now at the door like a child.

"Your majesty, please pull yourself together..."

"Pull myself together... Pull myself together?! My son is suffering! My son is suffering because of my mistake! This... This... This pains me... If I could go back... I'd be willing to die in that forest if it meant I could keep my son company! He's my only child!! He's my only child!!"

She viciously grabbed Alice and tossed her aside. The empress looked to the heavens and shouted before lifelessly knelt on the ground. Nier had her back to them and didn't turn around.

Alice stood up and wiped the blood off the corner of her mouth. She then silently knelt down and said: "Your majesty, if you become a mother, you will no longer be an empress."

"You think I want to be an empress?! I don't care if the previous emperor or my brother wants to take the crown, they can have my position! I don't care even if the empire only stands on one city. The whole empire and the whole mainland mean can't compare to my son! I just want to live with my son. I don't care if that means that I have to be a commoner, or a wanderer! I'm happy as long as my son is safe! I'm willing to do anything as long as my son is happy! What's the purpose of having everything that I currently have?! My son has to live in a canyon with those dirty and disgusting elves! He has to live with that bitch who not only stole my husband but even my son in order to live!!!"

The empress then stood up, flapped her sleeves, drew her sword and stabbed it into a wall by her side. The stone structure was but like cotton before the

empress's rage. The empress's hair came undone and covered her violent eyes. She huffed and puffed, and then thundered: "I! I shouldn't have retreated ten years ago! I should've captured that bitch! I should've slaughtered all the elves! Why... Why did I leave?! I shouldn't have returned eighteen years ago! I shouldn't have run away twenty years ago!! I... My son wouldn't have to suffer like this if I wasn't so stubborn... AAAAHHH!!!"

The empress angrily pulled her hair aside and bashed her head on the wall. Nier quickly turned around and tried to hold her back. But then she dexterously and skilfully stopped herself, turned around, drew her sword and shouted: "Enemy attack!"

The next second later, the reflection of a familiar face was seen on her blade. The empress stood up and looked at Luna, while Luna looked back at them silently.

The empress waved her hand and irritably said: "Get lost. I won't repeat myself a second time. Now, get lost."

"Your majesty! I..."

"I?!"*

Nier's sword nipped Luna but despite her bleeding from it, she didn't back down. Instead she looked at the empress's back and shouted: "Your humble servant... Your humble servant can help his majesty!"

"An elf like you has no business here!"

"It is precisely because your humble servant is an elf that your humble servant can help his majesty! His majesty will be alright if the berserk portion of his mana can be sucked out! Your humble servant can do that!!"

Luna pressed the sword pointed at her down and rushed over towards the empress as she shouted: "Your majesty! Your majesty, you should know that! Your majesty! His majesty will be fine if his mana can be sucked out! I can do it! I beg you! Please let me help him if you don't want to see his majesty suffer! Please let me help him! I can do it!"**

Luna wasn't afraid of the sword at all. She disregarded the sword before her and forced her way forward. The merciless Nier, however, was scared. She

moved her sword and watched her vigilantly, but was unsure if she should strike or not. The empress behind her had her back facing towards them. Her silhouette was shaking like an elderly person.

The empress vigorously turned her head around and took big strides over. She grabbed Luna by her collar and dragged her to the door of the room. She violently kicked the door open and then tossed Luna inside. The empress then turned around to look at Nier and shouted: “Nier! Watch her! If she tries anything funny with the prince, take her head!”

“Understood!”

“Thank you, your majesty!”

Luna picked herself up, turned around to see the silhouette where the screams were coming from, took in a deep breath and walked over.

Glossary

*Luna referred to herself using the wrong version of “I”, relative to their hierarchal status

**Luna does switch from referring to herself as “Your humble servant” to “I” and informal speech towards the end of her dialogue there, most likely due to urgency, therefore dropping her formal tone

IMPORTANT: For the love of all that’s flipping holy, read my disqus comment in today’s chapter! If you don’t and find yourself lost or ask me a question about it, I’m going to ignore you.

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Chapter 50

While I was in a hazy state, I felt my lower body go numb... No... Not that type of numbness from poor blood circulation, but rather... The type of... Yeah... The type where you feel really good...

Yeah...

Afterwards...

I was so shocked my heart nearly jumped out of my chest. I desperately tried to lift my head but the rope by my throat prevented me. I had just regained my senses so everything looked pitch-black to me. However, I could recognise who it was from her voice. In fact I didn't even need to hear her voice. There was only one person here who could help me, so there was no question about it.

“AAAHH!!!”

A painful cry from the bottom of my bed could be heard. Only mom can withstand my mana. Lucia passes out just from licking my lips. Luna, however, swallowed all of my mana!! I could hear her rolling around and slamming the ground, but I couldn't lift my head.

I shouted: “NIER!!!!!! NIER! HURRY AND UNTIE ME! UNTIE ME!!”

“Right away.”

I heard a calm and familiar voice. I caught a glimpse of the light from the reflection of Nier's sword and all the ropes that had me tied up came undone. I quickly popped myself up. I still had no strength in my legs and couldn't support myself. I basically rolled off the bed. I hit my head onto the floor hard when I rolled off but I didn't care about that. I used my arms and legs to desperately crawl over to her. My vision was ultra-poor and still dark, but I still caressed one of her hands.

“Luna! Luna!”

I desperately rubbed my eyes. My quivering hands searched around and reached for Luna’s body. Luna was curled up like a ball. Her face was covered in tears, while a liquid with a foul stench flowed from her lower body. The liquid was flowing out of every place liquids could flow out of from her body. That was a natural physiological reaction. It was only natural for Luna to lose control over her body like that when her magical prowess is a far-cry from mom. Even mom needs to release it after sucking out my mana.

Luna grabbed my arm with all her might and pushed me onto the floor. She mounted me and stared at me with her blood-red eyes in the darkness which was like a wolf that found its prey. She desperately rubbed her lower body against mine, while her fingers gripped my chest. She laughed in a lunatic tone which and shouted: “Come on... Hurry! Hurry! I can’t take it anymore!! I can’t take it anymore! Hurry!! Do it! Ravage me! Ravage me! I want it! I want it!!”

Is this what an elf in heat is like?! The lust of elves literally explodes on full moon nights. Even mom gets horny after sucking out mana, albeit being able to retain her sanity. But I could tell that Luna had gone completely mad. Her breathing sped up to a dangerous rate. She ripped my clothes off with her hands. I could feel the places she rubbed against become instantly moist. Her smile was that of someone who was insane. She was drooling like a rabid dog. She tore off her skirt, revealing her entire beautiful body, which also seemed to slightly glow. I could see the spring water of life run down the mountains and straight downwards. She lowered her head and crazily licked my face.

“Get lost!! You don’t deserve to touch my son with your filthy body! I’ve already shown an excessive amount of generosity by allowing you to do that!”

Mom’s cold voice came from above Luna’s head. She grabbed Luna with one arm and threw her to one side, where two Valkyries quickly proceeded to hold her down. However, Luna in her insane state was too much for even the Valkyries to hold down. She swiftly broke free of them and stumbled over like a zombie.

Shiiiiing!!

I heard the sound of a swift sword draw. I reacted as if I’d been conditioned to

the reflex, hugged the leg by my side and shouted: “Mom... Mom!! Don’t! Don’t!!”

“...Son, don’t be rash. You just focus on resting... I won’t kill her, alright?”

Mom bent over and stroked my head. I then heard a muffled thud. I saw Luna lifelessly kneeling on the floor, and then slowly fall to the ground. I’d expended my last ounce of strength as well so my eyes were covered with a dense fog once again. My painful and powerless body went limp on the floor and I passed out again.

At least it stopped hurting...

The empress returned Nier her long sword and Nier sheathed it into its scabbard. She then carried me and put me on my bed. The two Valkyries held Luna who was unconscious and quickly dragged her out. The empress stepped over the filth Luna left behind, frowned and said: “Get the servants to clean this room up before my son wakes up. Re-attach the doors and clean the floor.”

“As you command.”

Nier nodded and then quickly left the room. The empress walked up to my bedside, pulled over a chair and sat down. She looked at my silent silhouette, reached her hand out and caressed my face. She remained silent for a long time.

After some time, Alice entered and at the empress’s side quietly said: “Reporting in, your majesty. The elf is still alive.”

“Is that so? In other words, I don’t need that bitch anymore since I have this elf...? In that case, the elves are a useless existence to me now. Hmm...”

The empress carefully pulled my blanket up.

With an enthusiastic look in her eyes, Alice looked at the empress and said: “That is correct, your majesty. We do not need the elves to keep the prince alive any longer. The elf’s reaction may be a bit overwhelming, but she can be used nonetheless. Your majesty, we should now continue the war that we did not finish ten years ago. Once we conquer the elves, we will truly have conquered the mainland.”

However, the empress didn't respond to her. She just continued to silently look at her son's silent sleeping face for a long while. Before the war ten years ago broke out, the eyes of the empress was filled with determination and murderous intent. Back then, not even Alice dared to look into the empress's eyes. But in the present, ten years later when discussing the war, the empress's eyes were filled with love and satisfaction. Her eyes didn't have a tinge of murderous intent in her eyes.

"Forget it."

A moment later, the empress gently sighed, smiled as she caressed her son's face and said: "My son has returned. I no longer have any reason to start a war. What's the point of calling upon all of the country's power and resources to attack a block of land? I would have to form an army to protect the place, and send someone to train them. When I join the expedition, Castor aside, even Socina will take advantage of the situation to take action. War is not a tool but a tactic... I'm tired of it... I'm tired of it... I'm satisfied as long as my son is by my side. This is enough. It's enough."

Alice was silent for a while before softly replying: "Understood."

She then turned around to leave.

The empress who once rode at the very front on her white steed while her eyes were filled with murderous intent and rage had disappeared. She disappeared when the prince returned. The once valiant war commander who led tens of thousands of soldiers had become a mother who quietly watched over her son sleeping. Alice clenched her fists tightly and punched the wall beside her, creating a cracking sound and leaving a crack which ran through half of the wall.

"It's all because of that damned prince!"

"Son, I told you that I would tell you about the past once you wake up. I'll tell you what happened ten years ago... No... No... I... I'll tell you the story from twenty years ago... That was how everything started..."

The empress sat by the bedside and gently caressed her son's hands. She watched her son who was still sleeping and softly said: "Son, I lied. I don't dare tell you the story once you wake up. I know that you'll definitely look at me

disappointed...because I was very weak back then... I was a scaredy-cat... I... I'll just tell you here and now..."

The empress took a deep breath, looked at her son's face, the face which was the same as that frivolous young man's twenty years ago, and said: "It was in spring twenty years ago... When I was just... Fourteen... In this room...and on this bed... What happened..."

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Chapter 50 (Uncensored)

While I was in a hazy state, I felt my lower body go numb... No... Not that type of numbness from poor blood circulation, but rather... The type of... Yeah... The type where you feel really good...

As for the specific spot... As for the specific spot...

It was around...around... The part below my lower abdomen... It was a feeling I'd never experienced before. It went numb like I got electrocuted. The feeling started below my lower abs and spread throughout my body, and into my brain. It felt so good I almost moaned. Something gentle and warm was teasing my sensitive spot causing me to experience the most basic human physiological reaction...

Yeah...

Afterwards...

As my conscious slowly returned to me, I heard a sucking sound coming from my lower body. I lost conscious before so I could only feel my most basic reactions, but now that I was conscious, I came to the realisation that I had graduated from boy-hood to man-hood while I was unconscious...

The sharp pain I felt from my body and the nice feeling I experienced in my lower body slowly dissipated. I remember Lucia once said that there were two methods to drain out mana. One was through saliva, the other was... In other words, the person helping me remove my berserk mana chose the last option which neither her nor I could accept...

“AAAAHHH!!!”

A mournful and painful cry came from my lower body. I was so shocked my heart nearly jumped out of my chest. I desperately tried to lift my head but the rope by my throat prevented me. I had just regained my senses so everything

looked pitch-black to me. However, I could recognise who it was from her voice. In fact I didn't even need to hear her voice. There was only one person here who could help me, so there was no question about it.

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Alice was silent for a while before softly replying: “Understood.”

She then turned around to leave.

The empress who once rode at the very front on her white steed while her eyes were filled with murderous intent and rage had disappeared. She disappeared when the prince returned. The once valiant war commander who led tens of thousands of soldiers had become a mother who quietly watched over her son sleeping. Alice clenched her fists tightly and punched the wall beside her, creating a cracking sound and leaving a crack which ran through half of the wall.

“It’s all because of that damned prince!”

“Son, I told you that I would tell you about the past once you wake up. I’ll tell you what happened ten years ago... No... No... I... I’ll tell you the story from twenty years ago... That was how everything started...”

The empress sat by the bedside and gently caressed her son’s hands. She watched her son who was still sleeping and softly said: “Son, I lied. I don’t dare tell you the story once you wake up. I know that you’ll definitely look at me disappointed...because I was very weak back then... I was a scaredy-cat... I... I’ll just tell you here and now...”

The empress took a deep breath, looked at her son’s face, the face which was the same as that frivolous young man’s twenty years ago, and said: “It was in spring twenty years ago... When I was just... Fourteen... In this room...and on this bed... What happened...”

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